



# SCROOGE'S CHRISTMAS

by Theodosia Paynter and G. A. Grant-Schaefer

OPERETTA/MUSICAL IN 2 ACTS

BASED ON DICKENS' "CHRISTMAS CAROL"

*PUBLISHED BY*

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PO Box 1595  
Venice, FL 34284

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### SCROOGE'S CHRISTMAS

*This operetta is appealing to all ages, and may be effectively presented by all the combined grades, or by the high or lower grades separately. Where an all-grade performance is desired, the larger and more important characters of Scrooge, Fred, Bob, Jacob Marley's Ghost, Mrs. Cratchit and 2 Gentlemen should be taken by students of the upper classes. The minor characters, which may be large or small, are Belinda, Martha, Carollers, Angels, and Festive Ghouls and Ghosts. The small characters are Peter, Tiny Tim, Boy, Girl, Ragamuffins, Grocery Lads and Shopping Lasses. This makes a satisfactory distribution of parts. The alto part is so written that it may be omitted, if necessary. All the melodies are within easy range and are easily learned.*

### CHARACTERS

EBENEZER SCROOGE .....Grouchy, selfish and tight-fisted  
FRED (*Scrooge's Clerk*) .....Frigid and timorous  
BOB CRATCHIT (*Scrooge's nephew*) .....Poor, but always cheery  
TWO GENTLEMEN .....Charity's Agents  
JACOB MARLEY'S GHOST.....Remorseful Spirit  
MRS. CRATCHIT (*Bob's wife*).....Expansive in ribbons  
PETER CRATCHIT(*Son*) .....Dressed to the teeth  
TINY TIM (*Son*) .....Lame, but brave of heart  
BELINDA CRATCHIT(*Daughter*).....Mother's helper  
MARTHA CRATCHIT(*Daughter*) .....A fine young lady  
BOY }  
GIRL } (*Young Cratchits*) .....Expectant of goodies

Also any number of CAROLLERS, RAGAMUFFINS, ANGELS, FESTIVE GHOULS, GROCERY LADS, SHOPPING LASSES, LITTLE CHEFS, GHOST

### SYNOPSIS

#### ACT I

Scene 1--Scrooge's office seen through windows on Christmas Eve

Scene 2--Interior of Scrooge's office...later the same night

#### ACT II

The Cratchit Home....Christmas Day noon

### LIGHTING

Act I: It is early evening. The dim outside moonlight is in contrast to the bright light of Scrooge's office inside, where the figures are distinctly visible to audience. When the Angels appears, all is dark but for their candles and a beam of rosy light which falls on them. A blue light is thrown on Marley's ghost and an ordinary one on Scrooge during their scene, while all is dark.

Act II: The lighting should be as bright as possible. Candles are placed on mantel and dining table. A bright glow shows in fireplace.

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### THE STORY

Carollers and Ragamuffins celebrate Christmas Eve before Scrooge's office with joyous singing and dancing. Scrooge is sitting in his counting-house gloating over his money. The singers annoy him and he chases them off. He begrudges his clerk warmth and even the Christmas holiday. Scrooge repulses his nephew's hospitality and scoffs at charity seekers. When he is finally alone, he is haunted by ghouls and Christmas angels.

The ghost of his former partner, Jacob Marley, comes to him and convinces him that his cold and unkindly way of life is storing up trouble for him after death. Scrooge is alarmed, and as he thinks about it, his granite heart softens. He immediately sends for gifts of food and toys to take to the home of his nephew Christmas day.

Bob Cratchit's household on Christmas, though poor, is redolent with a joyous spirit. Tiny Tim, the little lame son, says "God bless us every one," and all sit about the goose dinner with great rejoicing. Scrooge comes and watches them before announcing himself, and hears Bob upholding him to all. Finally he joins the family and presents them all with gifts. The happy day is ended in playing Blind Man's Bluff, Scrooge having the time of his life.

### MUSICAL NUMBERS

#### Act I

1. INTRODUCTION: RING THE BELLS! ....Carollers and Chorus
2. OUR BONES ARE COLD.....Ragamuffins
3. BONFIRE DANCE .....Ragamuffins
4. GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN..Chorus
5. EXIT OF CHARACTERS .....Instrumental
6. COME, THIS YULETIDE NIGHT.....Scrooge and Angels
7. CHIMING BELLS (Carol) .....Chorus
8. GROTESQUE DANCE .....Festive Ghouls
9. GHOSTS .....Ebenezer, Jacob and Ghosts
10. CHRISTMAS ERRANDS .....Grocery Lads and Shopping Lasses

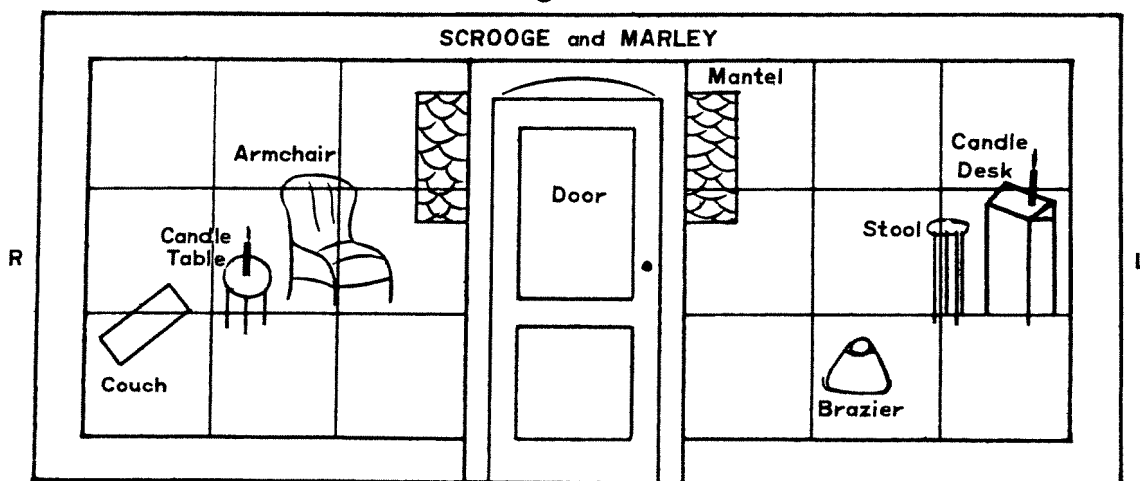
#### Act II

11. OH, CHRISTMAS TREE! (Carol).....Carollers and Chorus
12. BOB UP RESPLENDENT.....Chorus
13. THE GOODLY GOOSE .....Bob, Mrs. Cratchit and Family
14. GOD BLESS US EVERY ONE! .....Tiny Tim and Chorus
15. HEY AND A HO!.....Little Chefs and Chorus
16. BLIND MAN'S BLUFF .....Scrooge and Chorus
17. FINALE: RING CASTLE BELLS.....Entire Cast

## STAGE SETTING

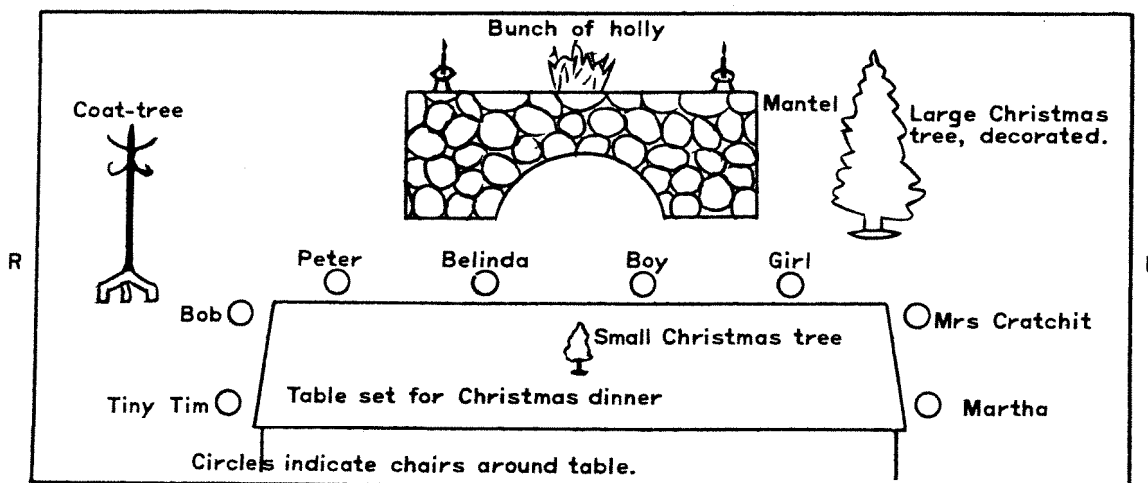
**Act I:** A beaverboard front has two large windows on opposite sides of a central door above which is a sign "SCROOGE and MARLEY." This is placed a little USC in order to permit more floor space DS for the Chorus and their activities. After the first choruses are sung, the curtain is lowered for a few moments and the office front is removed. When the curtain goes up, the interior of office appears just as it was. There is a couch SR. At SL is a high, narrow desk on which is open a large account book. A lighted candle is near the book. A small brazier is nearby on the floor. Near the couch UR, is a table on which is a lighted candle. A mantel and fireplace are in UC. A dim glow is seen in fireplace. Scrooge's wing-chair (*or any other over-stuffed armchair*) is between fireplace and table. There is a footstool near chair. The room is dingy and depressing. The walls for this room may either be a "set" or curtains, whichever equipment is available.

Setting for Act I



**Act II:** All furniture except fireplace is removed and replaced with other representing the Cratchit home. It is as cheerful as Scrooge's office is gloomy. In the center of the room is a table set for Christmas dinner. It must be large enough to seat the many Cratchits. A coat tree is at SR of fireplace and a Christmas tree, decorated, with a glistening star at top, is at SL.

Setting for Act II



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### PROPERTIES

Act I: Bonfire made with sticks piled up against each other, a red light showing from under; armchair for Scrooge; small table; high, old-fashioned desk and stool; dull red glow in fireplace; 2 candlesticks and candles; couch, blanket and pillow; fire tongs; brazier; large account book on desk; quill pen and pen cup; bag of coins; books for charity signatures; lead pencil; small, shining, brass ornament on mantel; natural colored shopping baskets.

Act II: Bright glow in same fireplace; long dining table and tablecloth; 8 chairs of different shapes and sizes; coat tree; fire bellows; dishes and flatware to set dinner table; mugs; artificial goose on platter; carving knife and fork; plum pudding; imaginary apple sauce in dish; large platter or plate for pudding; trays for Chefs piled high with fruit or gifts of bright colors; boiled potatoes; holly and mistletoe for decorations; fire tongs.

*NOTE: In latter part of Act I when all the bells sound, alarm clocks, dinner bells, horns, etc., may add to the din. Above all is heard the deep, loud tones of the tower bell slowly striking twelve. The noise should last about a minute. The Shopping Lads and Lasses will form the Chorus. The baskets are used only in the scene with Scrooge in Act I*

### COSTUMES

SCROOGE...He is tall, thin, and stooped, has an acrid, shrewd manner, and moves like an old man. (Office Costume) Grey wig with queue. Spectacles. Ankle-length coat, buttoned up front. Black shoes. Grey socks. (Night Costume) Long-sleeved night-shirt. Long-toed white slippers, and deep-pointed white night cap sticking straight in air with tassel on top.

FRED...He has a chilled and apologetic air. Dark swallow-tail coat and dingy figured vest. Grey knee breeches. Tan hose and flat, black pumps. Brown wig and queue tied at end with narrow black ribbon. Stock at throat. Around neck and over shoulders is wrapped a plaid woolen scarf. Black tricorn hat. His whole air is of shabbiness.

BOB...Jaunty and easy-going. Bright green, double-breasted coat with wide lapels. It reaches to knees. Flowered cravat and straight wing collar. Orange tights. Tan spats. Carries cane and has sprig of holly pinned to his lapel. He is short and stocky and his countenance is florid. High, buff-colored hat with black band.

THE TWO GENTLEMEN...Both are genial in manner. 1st Gentleman wears lapelled, black cutaway coat. Tan vest and high wing collar with narrow, black bow tie and ruffled front. Tan tights are covered at ankles with high spats. Sleeves of coat have deep cuffs, and ruffles show at the wrist. Watch fob hangs from vest at right. Tan hat with pinch brim rolling up on each side. The crown is 6 inches deep, stiff, and broader at top than at head. It has an inch-wide band. Wig with short queue tied with narrow black ribbon. The 2nd Gentleman is thinner but wears a similar costume.

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His cravat may be of bright colors, and the costume in general may differ from that of 1st Gentleman in color.

MARLEY'S GHOST...He is thin, and wears a business costume during life. He is covered with a ghost-like shroud of one thickness of grey cheese cloth. His jaw is tied with a strip of white cloth, and when he unties it, his jaw drops open. His queue is about 8 inches long and wired to stick straight out behind him. Its end is tied with a narrow black ribbon. Coat is double-breasted swallowtail of dark red. High white collar and ruffles at throat. Tights the same color as coat. High black boots. Around waist, the trailing behind him, is an iron chain to which are attached money-boxes, metal purses, etc. When he moves, chain clanks and scrapes floor.

MRS. CRATCHIT...Is a short, stout woman with cheery face and rosy cheeks. Faded, flowered dress with high waist, full skirt and puffed, short sleeves and small apron. White fichu and ruffled cap. On cap, shoulders, sleeves and skirt are little ribbon bows.

BELINDA...Black bodice and black, full, ankle-length skirt. Blouse is of thin white material with short, puffed sleeves and square-cut neck. Sprig of holly at shoulder and a red bow in hair.

MARTHA...Light blue wool or cambric princess-style dress, sleeves puffed at shoulder but tight at wrist, the tightness beginning four inches from shoulder. The waistline is high and skirt falls to shoe-tops. A cape may be worn close around neck falling halfway to waist. Or, a rather high square neck may be cut on dress and no cape used. Bands of grey flannelette trim wrists, cape-edge, or neck out-line of dress and hem of skirt. A poke bonnet may be made of cardboard. This may be grey with a blue facing on underbrim in front around face. Pale blue ribbons form rosettes over ears and tie under chin. A shawl is worn over dress, or if a black or grey cloth cape extending to knees is available, it will do as well.

LITTLE GIRL...Bo-Peep style dress of gingham with plain waist, buttoned down front. Neckline is close and there is no collar. Full, ankle-length skirt with big puffs over hips on each side of top of skirt attached to waist.

LITTLE BOY...Long, straight tunic almost to knees with long sleeves gathered in a little at wrists. Close-fitting turnover collar of same material. Flowing tie fastened in bow at throat. The colors may be any desired.

PETER...White shirt with stand-up wing collar much too big for him. His hair has been "greased" and slicked back.

TINY TIM...Long black trousers high at waist. Black sash without ends showing. White tucked shirt with flat, starched collar. Black Windsor tie. Straight, long-sleeved black jacket which does not cover full front of shirt. Wool cap full in front with large visor. Large, fringed plaid shawl worn over shoulders.

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CAROLLERS...Green tunics and red tights. Green hoods attached to red scalloped shoulder capes with bunches of holly fastened here and there. Green slippers with pointed toes. Many little bells may be attached to red sash ends. Sleeves of tunic are long and straight.

RAGAMUFFINS...Boys are in rags and tatters. Girls wear ragged skirts, plain waists, shawls over head or shoulders. Hems of skirts are ragged or crooked. Both boys and girls may wear shoes much too large.

SHOPPING LASSES...Tan dresses with full, ankle-length skirts. Fitted waists with lace-trimmed rounded necks. Sleeves are full, but tight as they end below elbow, and are edged by 3 inch ruffle of lace. Green mitts may come halfway to elbow, with half-length fingers. Green poke bonnets match mitts. Dark brown capes are gathered at neck and fall to hems of skirts. They carry baskets.

GROCERY LADS...Horizon blue suits of plain jackets and knee-length knickers. Orchid vests. Flat, white, turnover collars and soft, yellow ties fastened in square knots. Copper-colored Tam O'Shanters and hose of same color. Black Oxford shoes. They carry baskets.

GHOULS...Humorous masks with long, pointed or turned up noses. Big eyes, some winking. Mouths large and smiling. Imitation long eyelashes of green, orange or black. All are dressed as clowns and may be either girls or boys. The colors should contrast strongly, one, perhaps, of purple and red, while another is lemon and pink, with brown trimming; a third to be yellow or purple.

GHOSTS... Simplified versions of Jacob Marley's costume.

ANGELS...These little figures, both boy and girls should resemble the carved painted German angel figures so common as Christmas tree ornaments. Corkscrew curls (for girls) are wreathed with colored flowers. White robes, reaching well below knees, and with long, flowing sleeves, are worn. Cheesecloth may be used but cambric is preferable. The hems are carefully cut out with pointed edges of 3 inch depth. Around necks, fitting close, are stiff, shiny satin collars with pointed edges about four inches deep, circular and smooth. They are made of sateen and lined with stiff paper, cardboard or buckram. Gilded haloes are wired on back of heads. The wire is attached to cardboard and fits around head under hair. Flesh-colored stockings. A long, white candle is carried by each angel, or a tinsel star may be fixed to the top of each candle instead of a light.

LITTLE CHEFS...These should be the smallest boys. Dressed in white with chef's cap, white apron, coat and trousers. Fierce, dark moustaches, well pointed. Each carries a tray piled high with fruit or gifts.

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ACT I

*(SCENE: Exterior of EBENEZER SCROOGE'S office. SCROOGE, seen through window SR, is sitting in his chair counting his money. FRED is seen through window SL, seated at desk humped over his account book. Outside, the moon is shining, and as curtain rises, CHORUS, with a few dressed as CAROLLERS, is joyously singing. There are lighted candles on FRED'S desk and SCROOGE'S table.)*

**MUSIC #1 -- RING THE BELLS (Carollers and Chorus)**

*(Exit CAROLLERS and CHORUS SR.)*

*(RAGAMUFFINS enter SL with awkward, grotesque steps. They come forward to sing.)*

**MUSIC #2 -- OUR BONES ARE COLD (Ragamuffins)**

*(After song, ALL huddle around fire as if warming themselves.)*

1st RAG: Ail (*Pronounced eye*) I be cold in my dimmer reaches, Christmas or no Christmas!

2nd RAG: Hop about then! Rustle and bustle! Rattle and prattle!

3rd RAG: (*Jumping about as HE recites*) All be sharp  
And all be wiry!  
Jump around  
The warm bonfiree!

*(THEY take positions for dance.)*

**MUSIC #3 -- BONFIRE DANCE (Ragamuffins)**

*(DIRECTIONS: The character of this dance, as the title suggests, is very informal. It would be effective to have the boys perform all kinds of rhythmic antics, each character expressing his individuality. If preferred, a regular dance may be substituted by the director. After dance RAGAMUFFINS huddle down again to warmth of fire.)*

1st RAG: It's good it's Christmas! That's a warming thought!

2nd RAG: (*Pointing to SCROOGE*) Look at that old buzzard!

*(SCROOGE is gloating over his money. FRED is still bent over his work.)*

3rd RAG: Him's old Scrooge!

1st RAG: I heerd about him--an old skinflint he is. Not a funny  
bone in his body. Looks like a froze turnip!

2nd RAG: He should be a ragamuffin and have high doings like us.

3rd RAG: (*Disgustedly*) Counting his old money he is.

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1st RAG: Let's sing him a carol and he'll give us a tuppence?

2nd RAG: *(Contemptuously)* Not him!

3rd RAG: It's Christmas, ain't it? If he don't, we'll have had a bit of fun, and maybe cheered his frozen face up a bit--though you'd never think it to see him there.

1st RAG: Come on, then!

**MUSIC #4 -- GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN (Chorus)**

*(CAROLLERS enter SR and join RAGAMUFFINS in singing before SCROOGE'S door. During 1st verse SCROOGE appears to be annoyed. FRED stops working, and beams in direction of singers.)*

2nd RAG: *(After 1st verse)* Join all, now, and perhaps the old miser'll come and give us a bit of his gold.

*(As 2nd verse is sung SCROOGE puts his hands over ears, and towards the end, walks to the door and opens it.)*

SCROOGE: *Angrily* What's all this infernal thundering before my place of business? *(Stamps foot)* Stop it, I say! *(Catches 1st RAGAMUFFIN by coat collar and ear)* I'll have the beadle after you, young scoundrell! Is this a riot?

1st RAG: *(Trembling)* Sir! -- It's Christmas Eve!

SCROOGE: *(Letting him go)* Christmas! Christmas! Humbug !!! *(HE turns to FRED, who has come to door and is watching scene amazed. FRED ducks back to his work.)* Out with all of you! No Christmas ditties for me! Be off! *(Waves them away)*

**MUSIC #5 -- EXIT OF CHARACTERS**

*(ALL characters rush pell-mell off SR and SL as curtain is lowered for a few moments.)*

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