

CHRISTMAS CAROLS COME ALIVE

by Louis Merryman



CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS

Copyright Notice

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that this Work is subject to a royalty. This Work is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America and all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations, whether through bilateral or multilateral treaties or otherwise, and including, but not limited to, all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention and the Berne Convention.

RIGHTS RESERVED: All rights to this Work are strictly reserved, including professional and amateur stage performance rights. Also reserved are: motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all forms of mechanical or electronic reproduction, such as CD-ROM, CD-I, DVD, information and storage retrieval systems and photocopying, and the rights of translation into non-English languages.

PERFORMANCE RIGHTS AND ROYALTY PAYMENTS: All amateur and stock performance rights to this Work are controlled exclusively by Christian Publishers. No amateur or stock production groups or individuals may perform this play without securing license and royalty arrangements in advance from Christian Publishers. Questions concerning other rights should be addressed to Christian Publishers. Royalty fees are subject to change without notice. Professional and stock fees will be set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. Any licensing requests and inquiries relating to amateur and stock (professional) performance rights should be addressed to Christian Publishers.

Royalty of the required amount must be paid, whether the play is presented for charity or profit and whether or not admission is charged.

AUTHOR CREDIT: All groups or individuals receiving permission to produce this play must give the author(s) credit in any and all advertisement and publicity relating to the production of this play. The author's billing must appear directly below the title on a separate line where no other written matter appears. The name of the author(s) must be at least 50% as large as the title of the play. No person or entity may receive larger or more prominent credit than that which is given to the author(s).

PUBLISHER CREDIT: Whenever this play is produced, all programs, advertisements, flyers or other printed material must include the following notice: ***Produced by special arrangement with Christian Publishers.***

COPYING: Any unauthorized copying of this Work or excerpts from this Work is strictly forbidden by law. No part of this Work may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means now known or yet to be invented, including photocopying or scanning, without prior permission from Christian Publishers.

Christmas Carols Come Alive

How four familiar carols came to be

by Louis Merryman

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

These scripts are based on information in E.K. Emurian's *Stories of Christmas Carols* (Baker Book House, copyright © 1958). The dramatic situations are original, but the dialog contains actual historical quotes from the book.

PRODUCTION NOTES

These behind-the-scenes glimpses reveal the origins behind our beloved Christmas carols. *Included are four sketches:* 1. **“Joy to the World”** — *A sickly Isaac Watts penned this carol and others, attracting the attention of a young woman via the “old Internet” (post office).* 2. **“O Come, All Ye Faithful”** — *An unknown monk composed it in Latin; Rev. Frederick Oakeley assigned it the words we sing today.* 3. **“As with Gladness Men of Old/What Child Is This?”** — *Despite a raging chest cold, William Chatterton Dix penned new lyrics to a familiar tune.* 4. **“O Little Town of Bethlehem”** — *The lyricist visited the sleepy little town of Bethlehem in 1865. The tune came in the middle of the night to a procrastinating composer.* The sketches may be performed sequentially over the Sundays of Advent or together for a special program or sing-along.

Scripture marked (NKJV) is taken from The New King James Version. Copyright ® 1979, 1980, 1982, Thomas Nelson, Inc.

*This perusal script is for reading purposes only.
No performance or photocopy rights are conveyed.*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Joy to the World

O Come, All Ye Faithful

As With Gladness Men of Old/ What Child Is This?

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Joy to the World

CAST

Isaac Watts
Deacon Watts,
Lady Abney
Miss Elizabeth Singer
Narrator

COSTUMES: Deacon Watts and Young Isaac do not need to wear jackets. In Lady Abney's home, the dress is formal. Isaac is in a 1700s suit. He wears a shawl around his shoulders. Lady Abney and Miss Singer are dressed as if they were to meet the King. Lady Abney's gown is a dark color. Miss Singer's dress is bright and colorful, and she wears a bonnet.

SET: Table, two chairs at center

PROPS: Deacon Watts — Pen, paper; Isaac — Poem, leather briefcase, papers; Lady Abney — Tea set, cookies on tray

APPROXIMATE PLAYING TIME: 5¹ 2 minutes

1 *Optional Introduction*

2 **NARRATOR:** (*Singing to the tune of "Joy to the World"*) God's gifts
 3 to us are like precious jewels for us to use with joy. Shall
 4 we use them to please men or women? Or shall we use them
 5 for God? Or shall we use them for God? Or shall we, or shall
 6 we use them for God? (*DEACON WATTS sits writing at the*
 7 *table. ISAAC enters with pieces of paper and looks over his father's*
 8 *shoulder.*)

9 **ISAAC:** (*Makes icky face.*) Like, we're not going to sing that hymn
 10 again this Sunday, are we, Father?

11 **DEACON:** Of course, it's a fine hymn.

12 **ISAAC:** It's icky. "Tis like the precious ointment down Aaron's
 13 beard did flow, Down Aaron's beard it downward went, his
 14 garments skirts unto," is icky.

15 **DEACON:** Isaac, this hymn and the others we will be singing are
 16 good enough for your grandfather and your father.

17 **ISAAC:** It's icky. It doesn't inspire me to praise the Lord!

18 **DEACON:** Well, son, these hymns will have to be good enough for
 19 you.

20 **ISAAC:** They will never do for me, Father, regardless of what you
 21 and your father thought of them.

22 **DEACON:** (*Standing, angry*) If you don't like the hymns we sing,
 23 then write better ones!

24 **ISAAC:** (*Calmly*) I have written a better one, Father, and if you
 25 will relax and listen, I will read it for you.

26 **DEACON:** Really?

27 **ISAAC:** It's based upon Revelation Chapter five, verses six to ten.
 28 "Behold the glories of the Lamb, Amidst his Father's throne;
 29 Prepare new honors for his Name, And songs as yet
 30 unknown ...

31 **DEACON:** (*Standing*) That's quite good. (*Reading*) As a matter of
 32 fact, it's most excellent. (*Scratches lines through previous hymn*
 33 *on the paper on table.*) We'll sing it this coming Sunday. (*ISAAC*
 34 *and DEACON exit as NARRATOR enters and begins speaking.*)

35 **NARRATOR:** Isaac Watts' first hymn was so well received that

1 young Isaac was asked to prepare another for the next
 2 Sunday and then another for the next, a continuing request
 3 he filled for two hundred and twenty-two consecutive
 4 Sundays, single-handedly changing the singing habits of the
 5 English churches. He prepared himself for the Christian
 6 ministry and on his twenty-first birthday preached his first
 7 sermon from the pulpit of the Independent Church on
 8 London's Mark Lane. A promising career as a pastor was
 9 his until he was forced at the age of thirty-one to reluctantly
 10 resign his pulpit because of declining health. (*LADY ABNEY*
 11 *enters, carrying a tray of three cups and a pot of tea.*)

12 **LADY ABNEY:** My husband and I invited him to stay a few
 13 weeks with us. (*She puts tray on table.*) He stayed thirty-six
 14 years. (*Pause*) It was the shortest visit a friend ever paid a
 15 friend. My husband, Sir Thomas Abney, the Lord Mayor of
 16 London, made him our household chaplain. Isaac is
 17 currently working on a project dear to his heart, a volume
 18 of hymns based on the Psalms of David. He's reading back
 19 into them all the glow and glory of the New Testament story.
 20 Ah — here he is now. (*ISAAC enters. He is bent over and dark*
 21 *patches are under his eyes. He wears a shawl wrapped around his*
 22 *shoulders and looks like death warmed over. He shuffles over to*
 23 *the table and sits down.*)

24 **ISAAC:** Is she here yet, Lady Abney?

25 **LADY ABNEY:** Not yet, Mr. Watts.

26 **ISAAC:** I am an eligible bachelor, am I not, Lady Abney?

27 **LADY ABNEY:** You're a fine catch, Mr. Watts.

28 **ISAAC:** I'm not in the best of health.

29 **LADY ABNEY:** Drink your tea, Isaac, it will lift your spirits. (*Pours*
 30 *him a cup.*) God gave the Irish whiskey so they wouldn't
 31 conquer the world. God gave the British fog and foul
 32 weather so we would. And he gave us tea so the Brits who
 33 stayed at home could survive this foul climate.

34 **ISAAC:** Elizabeth Singer. It has a nice ring to it, Lady Abney.

35 **LADY ABNEY:** Yes it does, Isaac, yes it does. I'm sure she's quite

1 pretty.

2 ISAAC: Her letters speak of me as her true soulmate. She loves
3 my hymns.

4 LADY ABNEY: All England loves your hymns. “Alas! and Did My
5 Savior Bleed” and “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross” are
6 my favorites.

7 ISAAC: Elizabeth likes them, too. Her letters speak of them in
8 glowing terms. She loves them. She loves my soul. She calls
9 me her “jewel.” Elizabeth Watts has a nice sound to it, too.
10 I trust she will love this worn-out body.

11 LADY ABNEY: If she is meant for you, she will. What are you
12 working on today?

13 ISAAC: Psalm ninety-eight, verses four to nine. “Make a joyful
14 noise unto the Lord, all the earth: make a loud noise, and
15 rejoice, and sing praise. Sing unto the lord with the
16 harp ... and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound
17 of cornet make a joyful noise before the Lord, the King. Let
18 the sea roar, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they
19 that dwell therein. Let the floods clap their hands: let the
20 hills be joyful together before the Lord; for he cometh to
21 judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world,
22 and the people with equity” (KJV).

23 LADY ABNEY: That’s a beautiful passage, Mr. Watts. how does it
24 translate into music?

25 ISAAC: (*Speaking the lyrics*) “Joy to the world, the Lord is come,
26 Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare him
27 room, and heav'n and nature sing.”

28 LADY ABNEY: Wonderful! Is there music?

29 ISAAC: Yes. (*Gives her sheet of paper, then stands.*)

30 ISAAC and LADY ABNEY: (*Singing*) “Joy to the world, the Lord
31 is come, Let earth receive her King; Let every heart prepare
32 him room, and heav'n and nature sing.” (*Knock on door.*)

33 LADY ABNEY: It must be Miss Singer. (*LADY ABNEY goes to door.*
34 ISAAC straightens his tie and brushes his hair with his hand.
35 ELIZABETH enters, happily talking as she removes her bonnet and

1 *crosses to center.*)

2 **ELIZABETH:** I heard you singing as I came up the stairs. It was

3 one of the most beautiful songs I have ever heard. Is it one

4 of my precious jewel's new songs?

5 **ISAAC:** Yes, as a matter of fact it is. *(ELIZABETH stops dead in her*

6 *tracks. She stares at ISAAC. He stares at her. LADY ABNEY stares*

7 *at both of them.)*

8 **LADY ABNEY:** Miss Singer, Mr. Isaac Watts. Mr. Watts, Miss

9 Elizabeth Singer.

10 **ISAAC:** *(Extending hand)* My pleasure, Miss Singer.

11 **ELIZABETH:** You're a short man.

12 **ISAAC:** Five feet to the inch.

13 **ELIZABETH:** But you write such tall, magnificent music. I

14 imagined you to be tall with rosy cheeks. But you're short,

15 and your color is the color of death. How can you write of

16 the glory of God and the life everlasting looking like — like

17 ... you do? It has been a pleasure meeting you, Mr. Watts. I

18 admire your music, and I shall continue to do so.

19 *(ELIZABETH turns and almost bumps into LADY ABNEY.)*

20 **LADY ABNEY:** I have fixed us some tea.

21 **ELIZABETH:** Thank you, no. I admired the jewel, but I cannot

22 ... He looks like a man who should be in a casket. *(Fast exit.)*

23 **LADY ABNEY:** *(Crosses to ISAAC and puts her arm around his shawl-*

24 *covered shoulders.)* I'm sorry, Isaac.

25 **ISAAC:** How vain are all things here below, how false and yet so

26 fair.

27 **NARRATOR:** *(Enters.)* Isaac Watts became known as "the

28 bachelor poet." Despite his continuing bad health, he lived

29 well into his seventies. We now invite you to join Sir Isaac

30 Watts and Lady Abney as they sing "Joy to the World!"

31 *(Congregation sings "Joy to the World.")*

32

33

34

35

O Come, All Ye Faithful

CAST

Unknown Monk
 John Francis Wade
 Samuel Webb, Sr.
 Samuel's Mother
 Rev. Frederick Oakeley
 Narrator

COSTUMES: The Unknown Monk is costumed in a floor-length hooded monk's robe that hides his face in darkness (hooded, because we don't know who he is). The other characters should be dressed in 1800s period costumes. Males are dressed in suits with tails on the jackets. Mother wears a floor-length, wide skirt with a shawl over her shoulders.

SET: Small table and chair at center

PROPS: Unknown Monk – Blank paper, stack of paper, feather pen; John Francis Wade – Suitcase, blank paper in suitcase; Rev. Oakeley – Pen and paper; Mother – Letter

APPROXIMATE PLAYING TIME: 4¹ 2 minutes

1 *(The stage is dark. Spot on NARRATOR follows her as she*
 2 *crosses to center.)*

3 **Optional Introduction**

4 **NARRATOR:** *(Singing to the tune of "O Come, All Ye Faithful")* **A**
 5 **monk in Latin wrote it, And then it was translated, So in**
 6 **English we can sing it, At Christmas time.** *(At center is the*
 7 *UNKNOWN MONK. He is writing poetry. Next to him on the*
 8 *table is a stack of aged sheets of paper, his other writings.)*

9 **NARRATOR:** *(Spot on NARRATOR)* **"Latin's a dead language,**
 10 **as dead as it can be. First it killed the Romans; and now**
 11 **it's killing me."** *(Pause)* **Such was the lament of the**
 12 **schoolboy whose classical education included the study**
 13 **of Latin. And until the middle of the twentieth century,**
 14 **Latin was taught widely both in public and private**
 15 **schools. The Latin mass of the Roman Catholic Church**
 16 **endured from the early days of the church until the**
 17 **1960s.** *(Crosses to center.)* **Latin was the binding common**
 18 **universal language of the Roman Church for centuries.**
 19 *(At center)* **One of the scholarly communities of the French**
 20 **Roman Catholic Church was located in Douay (Douai),**
 21 **France. It was here most scholars agree that an unknown**
 22 **French monk between the years 1685 and 1690 penned**
 23 **the original Latin version of "O Come, All Ye Faithful."**

24 **UNKNOWN MONK:** *(Singing)* **Adeste fidelis, Laeti**
 25 **triumphantes; Venite, venite in Bethlehem. Natum videte,**
 26 **Regem Angelorum: Venite adoremus, Venite adoremus,**
 27 **Venite adoremus, Dominum.**

28 **NARRATOR:** **Beautiful!** *(UNKNOWN MONK and NARRATOR*
 29 *give each other a "thumbs up." UNKNOWN MONK puts the*
 30 *poem on the stack of other manuscripts and then exits.)* **Across**
 31 **the channel from France, the English Revolution of 1688**
 32 **was taking place. Those loyal to the Catholic British**
 33 **monarch, James II and his descendants became known**
 34 **as Jacobites. The bad blood between the Jacobites and**
 35 **the Monarchy erupted in deadly warfare in the Jacobite**

- 1 rebellion of 1745. (*JOHN FRANCIS WADE runs in with a*
 2 *suitcase or carpetbag, then sits at desk, out of breath.*
 3 *NARRATOR looks at him in surprise.*)
- 4 **JOHN FRANCIS WADE:** Whew. Is this the English College at
 5 Douay?
- 6 **NARRATOR:** That's down the street. This is the basement of
 7 a monastery.
- 8 **JOHN FRANCIS WADE:** In Douay?
- 9 **NARRATOR:** Yes.
- 10 **JOHN FRANCIS WADE:** Then I'm safe. I made it. England is
 11 not a safe place for me right now. You speak English?
- 12 **NARRATOR:** (*Being funny*) Oui.
- 13 **JOHN FRANCIS WADE:** British humor?
- 14 **NARRATOR:** Oui. Of course. And you are Monsieur ... ?
- 15 **JOHN FRANCIS WADE:** (*Stands.*) John Francis Wade at your
 16 service, ma'am. I'm a copyist.
- 17 **NARRATOR:** A copyist?
- 18 **JOHN FRANCIS WADE:** I copy music manuscripts and sell
 19 them. I also give music lessons. Keeps a roof over my
 20 head, food on my table and clothes on my back.
- 21 **NARRATOR:** You're a manual Xerox machine?
- 22 **JOHN FRANCIS WADE:** A what?
- 23 **NARRATOR:** Future humor. You copy everything by hand?
- 24 **JOHN FRANCIS WADE:** Yes, ma'am. (*Picks up poem.*) I take a
 25 poem like this. If it's worth copying ... (*Reads poem.*)
 26 Hmmm ... This is worth copying ... (*Sits, takes sheet of*
 27 *paper from bag.*) This is quite good. Excuse me ... (*Starts*
 28 *to copy the poem. Spot follows NARRATOR as she crosses to*
 29 *Stage Left. In darkness, JOHN FRANCIS WADE exits.*
 30 *SAMUEL WEBBE, SR. enters and sits at desk.*)
- 31 **NARRATOR:** In 1851 the eight Latin stanzas of "Adeste
 32 Fidelis" appeared in Wade's book *Cantus Diversi!* Wade
 33 died in 1787 before the French Revolution brought about
 34 the demise of the Douay community. In time, English
 35 Jesuits brought Wade's poetry finds to England. (*Lights*

1 up, *MOTHER enters weeping, in crisis mode, holding letter.*
 2 *She crosses to center.)*

3 **MOTHER: Samuel. Dear Samuel.**

4 **SAMUEL WEBBE, SR.: (*Stands.*) What's wrong, Mother?**

5 **MOTHER: (*Near tears*) This letter from Minorca. Your father's**
 6 **dead.**

7 **SAMUEL WEBBE, SR.: (*Shocked*) Father ... dead. (*MOTHER***
 8 *and SAMUEL WEBBE, SR. embrace. MOTHER faces*
 9 *audience.)*

10 **MOTHER: We have no money. Whatever will become of us?**
 11 *(Embrace is broken.)*

12 **SAMUEL WEBBE, SR.: I shall become a music copyist,**
 13 **Mother. It pays well. It will keep a roof over our heads**
 14 **and food on the table. (*Lights down. MOTHER and***
 15 *SAMUEL WEBBE, SR. exit. REV. OAKELEY enters and sits*
 16 *at desk. Spot on NARRATOR.)*

17 **NARRATOR: Samuel Webbe, Senior did just that. He worked**
 18 **from five a.m. in the morning to twelve midnight. His**
 19 **copyist income not only provided his family with food**
 20 **and lodging, it financed his musical education. He**
 21 **mastered music and several languages. In Webbe's 1782**
 22 **book *Essays on Church Plain Chant*, the tune associated**
 23 **with "O Come, All Ye Faithful" appeared with the Latin**
 24 **text. Because Mr. Webbe played the organ at the chapel**
 25 **of the Portuguese Embassy in London, the tune became**
 26 **known as "The Portuguese Hymn." (*Lights up*) This is the**
 27 **Reverend Frederick Oakeley. He is the pastor of The**
 28 **Margaret Street Chapel of the Church of England. The**
 29 **year is 1841.**

30 **REV. OAKELEY: Adeste Fidelis ... Hmmm ... Laeti triumphantes**
 31 **... Hmmm ... Ye faithful approach ye. Not bad ... We'll**
 32 **sing it this Sunday. (*REV. OAKELEY exits. NARRATOR***
 33 *crosses to center.)*

34 **NARRATOR: "Ye Faithful Approach Ye" didn't catch on. What**
 35 **did catch the eye of Oakeley's superiors in the Church of**

England were several pro-Catholic pamphlets. Suspended from the Church of England, he became a Catholic priest. Because he was determined to be the best priest he could be, he studied Latin.

REV. OAKELEY: (*Enters, sits, and writes.*) Adeste Fidelis ... Hmmm ... Laeti triumphantes ... Hmmm ... Ye faithful approach ye. Not ... Not at all ... O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant ... I like that. Venite, venite. O come ye, O come ye to Bethlehem. Natum vide, regum angelorum ... Hmmm ... Come and behold him, (*He sings the rest*) born the King of angels; O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, O come, let us adore him, Christ the Lord. I got it!

NARRATOR: Indeed, Pastor Oakeley had got it. And Christendom got it in 1852 in F. H. Murray's *A Hymnal for Use in the English Church*. O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant ... (*If strictly a drama, lights fade to black as NARRATOR finishes the first verse of "O Come, All Ye Faithful." If the carol is to be sung, NARRATOR'S last line leads into the singing of the carol by the choir or the congregation.*)

As With Gladness Men of Old/ What Child Is This?

CAST

William Chatterton Dix
Penny Farthingsworth
Doctor William Dix
Narrator

COSTUMES: 1860s dress for both males and females. William is in a full thick bathrobe, pajamas, socks, slippers, long white scarf, shawl, and bed cap. Penny wears a dark dress with full apron. The Doctor is in a period suit.

SET: Small table and chair at center. The chair is a large high-backed chair capable of holding a man in full thick robe, socks and slippers. Floor is littered with books and written-on papers.

PROPS: William — Papers, books, Bible, pillows, handkerchief; Dr. Dix — Pocket watch; Penny — Tea set (teapot, sugar pot, cream pot, and cups on tray) tea, cookies on tray, cloth napkins.

APPROXIMATE PLAYING TIME: 5¹ 2 minutes

1 **Optional Introduction**

2 (*NARRATOR and PENNY stand to one side. PENNY holds*
3 *teapot and plate of cookies.*)

4 **NARRATOR:** (*Singing to the tune of “The Twelve Days of*
5 *Christmas”*) On the twelfth day of Christmas William
6 Chatterton Dix gave to me, two Christmas carols.
7 (*Speaking*) This was not one of them.

8 **PENNY:** (*To audience*) Oooo ... duckies ... That was so good.
9 I’ve fixed you all a spot of tea, I have, and some
10 cookies. Sit back and get comfy now, and you’ll learn
11 the real story behind two carols you know and love.
12 (*PENNY exits. NARRATOR crosses to center where*
13 *WILLIAM sits at desk writing.*)

14 **NARRATOR:** This is William Chatterton Dix.

15 **WILLIAM:** I was born the year that Morse invented the
16 telegraph and the year that Queen Victoria ascended
17 the throne of the British Empire. I am twenty-one. It is
18 Epiphany day, 1859, (*Pause*) and I am very sick. (*Pulls*
19 *out large handkerchief.*) Achoo!

20 **NARRATOR:** God bless you. Mr. Dix resides in Bristol,
21 England. He is the son of Dr. William Dix, a prominent
22 surgeon. Our sick friend here has not followed his
23 father into the practice of medicine.

24 **WILLIAM:** I am a businessman. I sell insurance. (*Pulls out*
25 *handkerchief.*) Achoo!

26 **NARRATOR:** Bless you again. Both father and son will be
27 known for their writings. Doctor Dix will write a
28 biography of Lord Chatterton, a famous resident of
29 Bristol, and his son will be known for *Hymns of Love*
30 *and Joy.*

31 **WILLIAM:** *Pulls out handkerchief.*) Achoo!

32 **NARRATOR:** The last thing on William’s mind right now is
33 First Peter, chapter four, verse nineteen: “Therefore let
34 those who suffer according to the will of God commit
35 their souls to him in doing good, as to a faithful

1 **Creator” (NKJV).**

2 **PENNY:** *(Enters and crosses to WILLIAM. She is dressed in a*
 3 *period servant’s costume. She is most alive, bubbly and agile.)*
 4 **Oooo, ducky ... It’s time for your tea.** *(WILLIAM is*
 5 *startled. He jerks up straight. PENNY’S joy of living makes*
 6 *the suffering of his illness worse. Why, WILLIAM has asked*
 7 *himself, did God bless him with illness and curse him with*
 8 *PENNY?)*

9 **WILLIAM:** *(Stiff)* **Good morning, Penny.** *(She sets tea tray*
 10 *down. There is a teapot, cups and Christmas cookies on the*
 11 *tray. She pours him a cup of tea.)*

12 **PENNY:** Christmas time is a ‘orrid time of year for a man
 13 your age to get sick.

14 **WILLIAM:** Thank you, Penny.

15 **PENNY:** *(Finished pouring his tea, PENNY starts to fluff the*
 16 *pillow behind his back.)* **Let me fluff the pillows for you,**
 17 **ducky ... You’re going to have a visitor. I saw your**
 18 **father getting out of his carriage.**

19 **WILLIAM:** House call on the sick. *(Pulls out handkerchief.)*
 20 **Achoo!**

21 **PENNY:** Drink your tea ... *(Knock on door)* **I’ll get it.** *(Crosses*
 22 *to right.)*

23 **DR. DIX:** Good morning, Miss Farthingsworth.

24 **PENNY:** Good morning, Doctor Dix. *(PENNY and DR. DIX*
 25 *cross to WILLIAM. DR. DIX takes coat off.)*

26 **DR. DIX:** And how is my son this Feast of Epiphany?

27 **PENNY:** He’s doing fine. *(Helps DR. DIX with coat.)* **Been**
 28 **studying his assigned Bible lesson. He’s a good**
 29 **Christian he is, for a “high chuchman.”**

30 **DR. DIX:** And high chuchman ...

31 **PENNY:** Most of them need to get the “warm feelings” Mr.
 32 **Wesley got. Master William gets warm feelings.**

33 **WILLIAM:** I’m afraid, Miss Farthingsworth, it’s my fever
 34 **that gives me my warm feelings.**

35 **PENNY:** Oooo, ducky ... You’re the ‘umble one, you are.

1 He's been writing poetry again, Doctor Dix. Inspired, if
 2 you ask me. (*PENNY exits with coat. DR. DIX feels*
 3 *WILLIAM's head and then checks his wrist pulse with his*
 4 *pocket watch.*)

5 **DR. DIX:** No fever. Normal. Not even Methodist warm.

6 **WILLIAM:** Achoo! (*Pulls out handkerchief.*)

7 **DR. DIX:** Whatever illness you have, there's no change.

8 **PENNY:** (*Carrying a tray of shaped cookies*) Oooo, ducky ...

9 Cook has baked you and your father some Epiphany
 10 Day cookies. (*PENNY sets them down on the table as she*
 11 *describes them.*) Look ... We have three wise men. That's
 12 Melchior. He's the one with the white hair and long,
 13 flowing beard.

14 **DR. DIX:** A man of age and wisdom.

15 **PENNY:** Oooo, Doctor ... You're the smart one, you are. He
 16 brought gold. This one is Caspar. Cook says he's a
 17 beardless youth of ruddy complexion. He brought
 18 frankincense.

19 **DR. DIX:** Caspar represents youth. Balthasaar represents
 20 manhood.

21 **PENNY:** Oooo, Doctor ... You're the smart one, you are.
 22 Cook says he brought myrrh. He's a dark-skinned one.
 23 Chocolate, he is.

24 **WILLIAM:** Tradition, tradition, all tradition. Three excellent
 25 gifts delivered by who?

26 **PENNY:** Three kings from the East. It's in the ...

27 **WILLIAM:** Dear Miss Farthingsworth, the Bible says
 28 important men from the east who studied stars gave the
 29 Christ child three gifts: gold, frankincense and myrrh.
 30 We don't know who they were.

31 **PENNY:** Oooo, ducky ...

32 **DR. DIX:** (*Mimicking PENNY*) He's the smart one, he is.

33 **WILLIAM:** Bishop Reinald of Cologne, Germany, claimed to
 34 have found their skulls. For a price, you could see the
 35 skulls.

- 1 PENNY: You're funnin' with me, Mr. Dix.
- 2 WILLIAM: No, Penny, I'm not. But I dare say the Bishop
3 was funnin' with his people. Read this, Father.
4 (*WILLIAM hands DR. DIX a poem.*)
- 5 DR. DIX: (*Reading aloud*) As with gladness men of old, did
6 the guiding star behold; As with joy they hailed its
7 light, leading onward, beaming bright; So most
8 gracious Lord, may we evermore be led to Thee.
- 9 PENNY: Oooo, ducky ... You're the smart one, you are.
- 10 DR. DIX: I see you referred to the Easterners as "men"
11 instead of wise men, Magi or Kings.
- 12 WILLIAM: I called them men on purpose, Father, so no one
13 could challenge the biblical authenticity of my
14 statement. They were men; at least we can all agree on
15 that.
- 16 DR. DIX: I like the conclusion which you drew at the close
17 of the stanza. Too many European carols are merely
18 descriptive poems that contain no convincing statement
19 regarding what we are supposed to do with the birth
20 of Jesus.
- 21 PENNY: Oooo, ducky ... You're the smart one, you are.
22 What else have you been writing?
- 23 WILLIAM: Down there. (*Pulls out handkerchief.*) Achoo!
24 (*WILLIAM points to papers on the floor. PENNY picks up the*
25 *top sheet.*)
- 26 PENNY: Bless you, ducky! (*Pauses, then reads out loud.*) "What
27 child is this, who laid to rest on Mary's lap is sleeping?
28 Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while
29 shepherds watch are keeping? This, this is Christ the
30 King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing: Haste,
31 haste to bring him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary."
32 Oooo, ducky ...
- 33 PENNY and DR. DIX: (*Together*) You're the smart one, you
34 are.
- 35 WILLIAM: Greensleeves. (*Pulls out handkerchief.*) Achoo!



CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS

Thank you for reading this free excerpt from:

CHRISTMAS CAROLS COME ALIVE

by Louis Merryman.

*For performance rights and/or a complete copy of the script,
please contact us at:*

CHRISTIAN PUBLISHERS

P.O. Box 248 - Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52406

Toll Free: 1-844-841-6387 - Fax (319) 368-8011

customerservice@christianpub.com