

The Spirit Of Christmas Holds Court.

By Jennifer Cross



Ever wondered why people started hanging Mistletoe at Christmas? Or how Christmas used to be celebrated? Or even how Christmas became Christmas? Well, now is your chance to find out. Join the Spirit of Christmas and discover the answer to these questions and more. Together you'll travel through history, and find out how Christmas was celebrated in the past.

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The price paid entitles one purchaser to perform one production of this play
For non-commercial purposes. This play does not come with CD or Sheet Music.

Cast List

(Many parts can be doubled up.)

Speaking Parts (52)

Spirit Of Christmas	Origin 1	Origin 2	Origin 3
Mistletoe	Holly	Christmas Tree	Carol
Candle	Frost	Snow	Peace
Goodwill	Love	11 th Century	12 th Century
13 th Century	14 th Century	15 th Century	16 th Century
17 th Century	18 th Century	19 th Century	20 th Century
21 st Century	Little girl	Cook	Boy 1
Boy 2	Henry VIII	Queen	Edward VI
Oliver Cromwell	Soldier	Tom Smith	Sir Henry
Cole			
John Horsley	Grandfather	1 st Child	2 nd Child
3 rd Child	4 th Child	5 th Child	British Major
German Major	1939	1940	1941
1942	1943	1944	1945

Non-Speaking Parts (Misc. No.)

Guests	British Soldiers	German Soldiers	Christmas Sprites
Georgian Masquerade Dancers	Carollers	Frost Fairies	Snowflakes

Optional Non-speaking Parts (Misc. No.)

Family Member	Traveller	2 Angry Neighbours	Rich People
Poor People	Romans	Mary	Joseph
Angels	Baby Jesus	Shepherds	Wise Men

Musical Numbers

The First Noel	O Christmas Tree	Frost and Snow's Song	Love's Song
Georgian Masquerade Music	Silent Night	Final Song	

Music for Frost and Snow's song can be found at www.cyberhymnal.org under the title of 'Tell me the stories of Jesus'.

Music for Love's Song can be found at www.cyberhymnal.org under the title of 'Jesus loves the little children'.

Music for 'The First Noel' and 'Silent Night' can also be found at this site.

The site www.cyberhymnal.org is also a good for finding other Christmas hymns and carols, along with details of their composers. This would come in very useful should you wish to add carols from specific centuries with their specific scenes. For example, 'The Friendly Beasts' - circa 12th Century, 'A Babe Is Born In Bethlehem' - circa 14th Century, 'Coventry Carol' - circa 15th Century, 'To Weary Shepherds Sleeping' - circa 17th Century, 'Hark The Herald Angel Sing' - circa 18th Century, 'The Silver Star' - circa 19th Century, 'Merry, Merry Christmas Bells' - circa early 20th Century.

Sound effects

Scene 7 - Gunfire for the war in the trenches.

Costumes

Spirit of Christmas - Robes of Red and Green with a crown that resembles a Christmas Wreath.

Origins - Brown Tunics.

Candle - Yellow outfit and a candle to hold.

Holly - Green outfit with Red Spots/Berries and a holly crown.

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Mistletoe - Green outfit with White Spot/berries and a mistletoe crown.
Carol - Yellow and White with Black Musical Notes.
Christmas Tree - Brown Bottoms and Green Top and some ferns to hold.
Peace and Goodwill - Silver outfit.
Love - Pink outfit.
Centuries - White tops, Black Bottoms with a Sash with their Century Number on it.
Frost Fairies - Light Blue Outfits.
Snowflakes - White Outfits.
Christmas Sprites - Red, Yellow or Green outfits.
Other Characters - As appropriate to the role and the century they are from, i.e. Victorian costume for a Victorian role.

Props

General (needed throughout the play)

Throne on a dais for the spirit of Christmas.
Scrolls for the Centuries to read from.

Scene 1 Plain Christmas Tree. Carollers Lanterns.

Scene 2 Table, Chairs, Large Pie, Bowl with 4 Potatoes, Cloth to cover the bowl.

Yule Log, Cloth bag that contains the umberles

A lump of coal, Bowl with wooden spoon for mixing frumenty in.

Greenery for decorating the log

Holly for the log

Scene 3 Goose, Swan, Peacock, Wild Boar, Venison, Woodcock, Mince Pies, Christmas puddings and other platters of food.

Silver goblets, Long table, Chairs, Silver plates, Jugs

Large clock on the wall

Scene 4 Papers for Cromwell

Scene 6 Cracker for Tom Smith

Large bundle of letters for Sir Henry Cole, Plain Christmas Tree

Decorations (including wax candle, baskets of sweets, flags, little ornaments and small gifts)

Armchair, Newspaper

Hats, scarves and shawls for Mama to bring in.

Scene 7 Guns, Football, 2 Whistles

Props for Optional Scenes

Scene A

Manger for Nativity Scene.

Scene B

Mistletoe Bough.

Wreaths for Romans.

Weapons for Romans (Swords).

Scene C

Candle to be placed in the windowsill.

Windowsill.

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SCENE 1 - Origins and Traditions

(We open on the Spirit of Christmas standing centre stage)

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Now you're all here, it's time to start.
It's time for all to witness.
For all to hear the records,
As my servants tell of Christmas.

(Spirit of Christmas moves to take her throne (located at the back of the stage centre)

(Enter the ORIGINS OF CHRISTMAS they stand centre stage)

ORIGIN 1: We are the Origins of Christmas and we'll be first to speak. Before there was Christmas, there was the winter solstice. This was a time for Pagans to celebrate the passing of mid-winter, a time to liven up the dark days of winter, and to hurry along the renewal of springtime. The sun is starting to strengthen and the days are growing longer.

ORIGIN 2: It's a time to celebrate the passing of the old year, and to rejoice in the New Year and the spring that it will bring. It was a time for great feasting and jubilation. Many of the Christmas traditions that we have today, were started at this time.

ORIGIN 3: Christians wanted a day to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, and so Christmas became a Christian Holy Day.

SCENE A - OPTIONAL

(Insert nativity scene either acted in its own right, or along with the following song sung by the chorus)

CHORUS: The First Noel

(Angels could sing first verse)

The First Noel the angel did say,
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields where they lay;
In fields where they lay keeping their sheep,
On a cold winter's night that was so deep.

Refrain

Noel, noel, noel, noel,
Born is the King of Israel.

They looked up and saw a star,
Shining in the east, beyond them far,
And so to the earth it gave great light,
And so it continued both day and night

(The Shepherds enter)

Chorus

And by the light of that same star,
Three wise men came from country far;
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the star wherever it went.

Chorus

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This star drew nigh unto the north- west,
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay.

Chorus

(The Wise Men enter and give their gifts)

Then entered in those wise men three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there, in his presence,
Their gold and myrrh and frankincense.

Chorus x 2

ORIGIN 3: With this new annual celebration, old traditions were adopted, and new ones were formed. Christmas became a mixture of Christian, Pagan and folk traditions, but they all have one thing in common...the celebration of new beginnings.

(The Origins bow to the Spirit of Christmas and take up positions to the side of the Spirit)

SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS: Traditions, now I summon thee,
Of Christmas things, we long to know.
Come Mistletoe, Holly, Christmas Tree.
Come Candle, Carol, Frost and Snow.

(Enter Mistletoe, Holly, Christmas tree, Candle, Carol, Frost and Snow, they bow to the Spirit of Christmas and all stand to one side of her)

(Mistletoe and Holly step forward to centre stage)

MISTLETOE: At the coming of the Winter Solstice, with Christmas just around the corner, you'll find that I am at my best. My fruitful sprigs of mistletoe become a part of traditions. The Ancient Druids used me as a healing plant, and the Romans saw me as a plant of peace. If enemies met under my mistletoe sprigs they would lay down their weapons, and call a truce for the rest of the day. My sprigs are hung in doorways so that those under may kiss, and no lady may refuse me. A berry is removed for every kiss, and when all the berries are gone, then there are no kisses left. I stand for all as a sign of peace and friendship, of goodwill, and harmony. I'm also said to bring luck to all who see my sprigs in the homes they visit.

HOLLY: Our Holly's green and prickly.
Our berries they are red.
We're a sign of everlasting life,
As in winter we're not dead.

Romans made us into wreaths,
And gave us to their friends.
We've decorated homes,
And that's where our story ends.

(Mistletoe and Holly step back to where they were)

SCENE B - OPTIONAL

(Insert mime – Romans meeting under mistletoe and laying down their weapons, making friends, and giving each other wreaths)

(Christmas Tree and Carol step forward)

CHRISTMAS TREE: I, Christmas Tree, stand as a sign of endless life. My trees are always green, and people all around the earth decorate them with stars, tinsel and baubles. Sometimes they're decorated with candles, or lights, to represent the stars in the sky that help guide weary traveller's home, or the Bethlehem star that hovered over a stable long ago.

CAROL: Together with Christmas Tree, I bring joy and gladness throughout lands. People come together and sing my carols in hope and celebration, around their Christmas tree. Their troubles are forgotten as they listen and sing along to my songs.

CHRISTMAS TREE: Come, Sprites of Christmas and dance for us.

CAROL: Carollers of Christmas, come and sing.

(Christmas Tree and Carol step back to where they were)

(A plain Christmas tree is brought to centre stage. The sprites and carollers enter to sing and dance around it.)

O Christmas Tree

O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,
How Steadfast are your branches!
O Christmas Tree, O Christmas Tree,
How Steadfast are your branches!

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