

0. BACKGROUND of EBENEZER SCROOGE - Story Preface

1. BACKGROUND of EBENEZER SCROOGE

2. CHRISTMAS in BRITAIN before SCROOGE

3. SCROOGE and MARLEY

4. MARLEY'S GHOST PAYS SCROOGE A VISIT

5. THE FIRST of the THREE SPIRITS

6. THE SECOND of the THREE SPIRITS

7. THE LAST of the SPIRITS

8. THE END OF IT



This image depicts a view of London, in 1843, as it would have appeared when Dickens wrote "A Christmas Carol." Thomas Shotter Boys drew and lithographed the illustration. He published it, that year, in "Original Views of London as It Is."

Walking through the streets of 1843's London, at night, Dickens thinks about his developing story ideas. He conjures-up a character called "Ebenezer Scrooge."

Maybe that miserly old man once had a partner who was equally stingy. Dickens calls that now-dead chap "Jacob Marley."

Scrooge and Marley value money above all else. They have no love for anyone. They care about accumulating wealth. They do not share their resources with anyone and have no plans to use their worldly gains to help the poor.

Is there an antidote to such selfish living? Dickens, writing during the months of October and November, in 1843, thinks about the "Spirit of Christmas." Could that be an antidote to selfish living?

In 1843, however, people in Britain do not celebrate Christmas in the commercial sense (of today's Christmas). While many people go to church, on Christmas, and engage in the long-standing tradition of "making merry," not all children receive presents. While it is "the season" to care about others, not much is done to help those in need.

People, throughout Britain, aren't really thinking about the less-fortunate among them. So ... Dickens decides to send a message through his story. He invents three different "Spirits" - or "Ghosts" - who will teach his main character - Ebenezer Scrooge - a few lessons.

In the process of educating Scrooge, Dickens finds a way to return "Old Marley" to his former home - a commercial building located in the City of London. Now a ghost, Marley pays a visit to the dwelling's current resident (his old partner, Ebenezer).

Dickens creates the Cratchit family, from the Camden district of London, where poor-but-respectable people live. Despite their poverty, the Cratchits - with their many children - have a loving home.

One of the Cratchit children, however, suffers from the negative impacts of poverty. Tiny Tim will die unless he gets help.

With this story structure in place, Dickens quickly writes his novella. The author could use the extra cash such a story could generate, if it catches-on with the public.

See [Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/BACKGROUND-of-EBENEZER-SCROOGE-A-Christmas-Carol)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicAlignment/BACKGROUND-of-EBENEZER-SCROOGE-A-Christmas-Carol>

See [Learning Tasks for this story online at:](http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/BACKGROUND-of-EBENEZER-SCROOGE-A-Christmas-Carol)

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/AcademicActivities/BACKGROUND-of-EBENEZER-SCROOGE-A-Christmas-Carol>

Face of Jacob Marley

Near the beginning of "A Christmas Carol," Ebenezer Scrooge walks home from his office. When he arrives at his residence, which his now-dead partner used to occupy, Scrooge has a sense that he sees Jacob Marley (his former partner) in the door knocker.

Scrooge is momentarily befuddled because the image he sees looks exactly like Marley.

Dickens [tells us more](#):

Now, it is a fact that there was nothing at all particular about the knocker on the door, except that it was very large. It is also a fact that Scrooge had seen it, night and morning, during his whole residence in that place; also that Scrooge had as little of what is called fancy about him as any man in the City of London, even including—which is a bold word—the corporation, aldermen, and livery.

Let it also be borne in mind that Scrooge had not bestowed one thought on Marley since his last mention of his seven-years'-dead partner that afternoon. And then let any man explain to me, if he can, how it happened that Scrooge, having his key in the lock of the door, saw in the knocker, without its undergoing any intermediate process of change—not a knocker, but Marley's face.



Marley's face. It was not in impenetrable shadow, as the other objects in the yard were, but had a dismal light about it, like a bad lobster in a dark cellar. It was not angry or ferocious, but looked at Scrooge as Marley used to look; with ghostly spectacles turned up on its ghostly forehead. The hair was curiously stirred, as if by breath or hot air; and, though the eyes were wide open, they were perfectly motionless. That, and its livid colour, made it horrible; but its horror seemed to be in spite of the face, and beyond its control, rather than a part of its own expression.

As Scrooge looked fixedly at this phenomenon, it was a knocker again.

Click on the image for a better view of this illustration by Arthur Rackham. It appears in the 1915 edition of "A Christmas Carol," which was published by J.B. Lippincott Company.

Image, described above, appears at page 4 of the 1915 edition illustration by Arthur Rackham. Online, courtesy Wikimedia Commons.

PD

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Face-of-Jacob-Marley>



Spirit of Christmas - 1843

Illustration, by Alfred Crowquill, appearing in the 23 December 1843 edition of the *Illustrated London News*. Image was scanned from a copy of the newspaper at the Robarts Library, University of Toronto, by Philip V. Allingham with corrections by George P. Landow. Online, courtesy [Victorian Web](#).

PD

View this asset at: <http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Spirit-of-Christmas-1843>



BACKGROUND of EBENEZER SCROOGE

View this asset at:

<http://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/BACKGROUND-of-EBENEZER-SCROOGE-Illustration->