

Alfred's Basic Piano Library

Christmas Sonatinas

Willard A. Palmer ♦ Morton Manus ♦ Amanda Vick Lethco

Level 5

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Each sonatina movement may be played individually.

FOREWORD

At this level the student is ready to play sonatinas. A thorough understanding of the forms used in sonatinas is more readily attained when the themes consist of familiar melodies. The carols chosen for this book adapt themselves admirably for development as movements of sonatinas. For those movements which are developed in *sonata allegro* form, the authors have chosen carols that consist of two separate themes, so no new themes have to be invented. The developments are kept simple, so the student will be quite aware of what has been done to alter the theme being used. The results are quite musical, and the pieces make delightful new offerings for Christmas recitals, church programs, and home entertainment. The result is a Christmas book that offers something truly unique and new, and that will help every student to develop artistically as well as technically.

The authors offer their special congratulations to all piano students who are ready to play Christmas sonatinas, and wish them and their teachers a VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Sonatina No. 1 on Three Christmas Carols

The Joys of Christmas

This sonatina is in strict classical sonata form. The ideal form for the 1st movement of a classical sonata is the *sonata allegro* form, which consists of 3 parts:

- Part 1. EXPOSITION — the themes of the movement are “exposed” or stated. The 1st or main theme is in the key of the movement (called the *tonic* key). The 2nd or secondary theme is in the key a 5th higher (called the *dominant* key). The key signature is not changed, but accidentals are used to show the new key.
- Part 2. DEVELOPMENT — The themes may be altered in any way the composer wishes.
- Part 3. RECAPITULATION — The themes are restated. This time both themes are in the tonic key.

1st Movement (O Thou Joyful Day)

This well known carol is derived from the Latin Hymn “O Sanctissima.”

EXPOSITION:

1st theme in tonic key (C MAJOR)

1st theme: *O thou joyful day, O thou blessed day,
Holy, peaceful Christmas tide!*

2nd theme: *Earth's hopes awaken, Christ life has taken.
Praise Him, O praise Him on ev'ry side!*

Allegro

2nd theme in dominant key (G MAJOR)

The words of each of the Christmas carols that make up this three movement sonatina are concerned with the song the angels sang on the night of Jesus' birth.

Sonatina No. 2 on Three Christmas Carols

The Song of Christmas

The 1st movement of this sonatina is in classical *sonata allegro* form.

Since the key of the movement is F MAJOR, the EXPOSITION begins with the 1st theme stated in F, the *tonic* key. The 2nd theme is then heard in C, the *dominant* key. There is also a short CODA, or CODETTA. The *codetta* is an optional feature, which may be used when the composer wishes.

The DEVELOPMENT section is a bit longer than that of the 1st movement of the previous sonatina. In the RECAPITULATION, the two themes are heard again, this time with both in the tonic key. The piece concludes with the codetta in the tonic key.

1st Movement (There's a Song in the Air)

1st theme: *There's a song in the air! There's a star in the sky!
There's a mother's deep prayer And a baby's low cry!*

2nd theme: *And the star rains its fire while the beautiful sing,
For the manger of Bethlehem cradles a King!*

Words by J.G. Holland, 1879

Allegro moderato

EXPOSITION:

1st theme in tonic key (F MAJOR)

Based on the melody by
Karl P. Harrington

mf *legato*

Ped. ad lib.

mf

The last movement of a classical sonatina is always in the same key as the first movement, and it may be in *sonata allegro* form, as this one is.

3rd Movement (Angels We Have Heard on High)

“Gloria in Excelsis Deo” means GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST, the words the angels sang to the shepherds on the first Christmas night. The song of the angels was really the very first Christmas song.

1st theme: *Angels we have heard on high, Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply, Echoing their joyous strains.*
2nd theme: *“Gloria in excelsis Deo, Gloria in excelsis Deo!”*

Allegro moderato

EXPOSITION:

1st theme in tonic key (F MAJOR)

19th Century French Carol