THE CAROL AFTER EDGAR ALLAN POE
by J. H. McNulty

Once upon a midnight dreary, came a phantom grim and eerie,
Into Mr. Scrooge's mansion, right up to his chamber door;
When it entered, without tapping, Scrooge was sitting gently lapping
Gruel, and very nearly napping, on that Christmas Eve of yore.
All this happened on that very foggy night long years before,
Merely this and nothing more.

It was in the bleak December, very cold, you may remember,
Scrooge's fire, one single ember, casts no shadow on the floor.
Summer breeze or North-East freezer, were the same to Ebenezer,
Lean as Cassius, hard as Caesar, that was Scrooge the night before,
Marley's ghost and his three spirits came in through the heavy door,
Double-locked by Scrooge before.

"Give me comfort, ghost of Marley," "No, I can't, I've come to parley
Of your dark and murky future, show you what you have in store."
Scrooge felt anxious at this greeting, he disliked this midnight meeting,
And the ghost, who hated heating, from his head the bandage tore;
Cooling thus his burning brow and letting drop his lower jaw.
Scrooge collapsed upon the floor.

Then the ghost with no uncertain step moved to the casement curtain,
Lifted high the frosted window and there came a muffled roar.
"Scrooge now quit your kneeling posture; come and see, it's no imposture,
All these phantoms, at least most, your cronies were in days of yore.
Merchants, bankers, men of business, happy once, now groaning sore.
Listen to their moaning more.

"I have come to give you warning, close on twelve on early morning,
Three more ghosts will pay you visits; counting me that just makes four,
I, indeed, am not returning"; Scrooge was very nearly turning
Blue with cold, no fire was burning, and the night air came in fore
So he jumped into his bed, and closed his eyes, began to snore,
Went to sleep knew nothing more.

Ghosts of Christmas Past and Present came with warnings far from pleasant.
But the Last of these three spirits pierced his conscience to the core,
Down he fell in abject terror, till at length he spied a tremor
In the phantom, saw his error, saw the ghost was nothing more
Than his old familiar bed-posts, merely this and nothing more,
Now the fearful dream was o'er.

Scrooge awakened from his dreaming, found the morning sun was streaming
In his dark and dingy chamber from the ceiling to the floor.
He became a kinder master, saved the Cratchit's from disaster
almost he became a plaster saint, the wicked Scrooge of yore.
No more spirits, no more phantoms, no more "humbug" any more,
That's the end and nothing more