

Full Score

A Christmas Carol

for Trombone Quartet or Trombone Choir*

Charles Ives

arr. by Russell McKinney

Larghetto ♩ = 96

Score for Trombone Quartet or Trombone Choir, measures 1-5.

Parts: Trombone 1, Trombone 2, Trombone 3, Bass Trombone.

Key signature: B-flat major (two flats). Time signature: 6/8.

Measures 1-5 show the initial melodic lines for all four parts, marked *p* (piano). The music features a mix of eighth and quarter notes, with some slurs and accents.

Score for Trombone Quartet or Trombone Choir, measures 6-9.

Measures 6-9 continue the melodic lines for all four parts. Measure 7 includes the marking *G.P.* (Grave Play) above the staff.

Measures 8 and 9 show the continuation of the melodic lines, with some parts marked *p* (piano).

32 *moving ahead slightly* *poco rit.*

The musical score consists of four staves. The first staff is Treble clef, and the other three are Bass clef. The key signature is three flats (Bb, Eb, Ab). The score starts at measure 32. The first two staves have a *mp* dynamic marking at the beginning of measure 32, which changes to *f* at the start of measure 33. The third and fourth staves also have a *mp* dynamic marking at the beginning of measure 32, which changes to *f* at the start of measure 33. The tempo marking *poco rit.* appears above the first staff at the beginning of measure 35. The score ends at measure 37 with a double bar line.

A Christmas Carol by Charles Ives first appears in his “114 Songs” written in 1897 and is numbered 100 in that collection. Arrangements for SATB Choir began appear sometime later. Though much more conventional in structure and tonality than much of Ives’ works, the rhythmic movement contains his original approach to musical composition. Even without the text that Ives also wrote for it, the music somehow conveys the spirit of a Christmas carol, and the sonority of a trombone ensemble is well suited to this piece.

Performance tempos vary widely as Ives’ indications are a bit contradictory. The tempo marking here reflects my preference over years of directing the work with various choirs (both vocal and trombone) based on performances I admire.

I have moved the key down to Db Major from the original key of F Major. The divisi notes can be added when performing the piece with trombone choirs when there are multiple players on each main part.