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*Dramatic Publishing*

# JOHNNY APPLESEED

A Musical in One Act

Book, Music and Lyrics

by

GERALDINE ANN SNYDER



**Dramatic Publishing**

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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Book, Music and Lyrics by  
GERALDINE ANN SNYDER

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(JOHNNY APPLESEED)

ISBN: 1-58342-127-0

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**JOHNNY APPLESEED** was originally performed by the Blue Apple Players, Louisville, Kentucky, September 1978, and restaged several times. All productions were directed by Paul Lenzi.

### **CAST (in order of appearance)**

**Johnny Chapman (Johnny Appleseed) . . . . . MATT ORME**  
**James Trueblood / Eli / Ezra . . . . . CHAD HILDRETH**  
**School Marm Proctor / William . . . . . FRANK GOODLOE III**  
**Abigail / Woman 1 . . . . . DANA MEDLEY**  
**Sarah / Woman 2 . . . . . GERALDINE ANN SNYDER**

### **PRODUCTION STAFF**

**Director . . . . . PAUL LENZI**  
**Musical Director / Vocal Arrangements . . TIM MATHISTAD**  
**Musical Arrangements . . . . . JEFFERY LYNN HUTCHINS**  
**Choreography . . . . . DIANE CHAMBERS**  
**Setting and Costumes . . . . . GERALDINE ANN SNYDER**  
**Stage Manager / Lighting Designer . . . . . MATT ORME**  
**Sound Engineer . . . . . WILL HANCOCK**  
**Box Office Manager . . . . . JENNIFER ADAMS**  
**House Manager . . . . . AARON TAYLOR**  
**Production Photographer . . . . . MICHAEL ROBERTSON**

# **JOHNNY APPLESEED**

**A Musical in One Act**

**For a minimum cast of 5 (with doubling)\***

**Can be expanded to a cast of 20+\***

## **CHARACTERS**

**(in order of appearance)**

**JOHN CHAPMAN (JOHNNY APPLESEED)**

**FEMALE VOICE OFFSTAGE**

**JAMES TRUEBLOOD**

**SCHOOL MARM PROCTOR**

**ELI**

**WOMAN 1**

**WOMAN 2**

**WILLIAM**

**SARAH**

**ABIGAIL**

**EZRA**

**Running time: 55 minutes**

**\*See following page.**

This production was originally written for a small professional touring company, the Blue Apple Players, Kentucky's most popular theatre for young people. A cast of five performed it. The following roles were doubled:

JAMES TRUEBLOOD / ELI / EZRA  
WILLIAM / SCHOOL MARM PROCTOR  
WOMAN 1 / ABIGAIL / FEMALE VOICE OFFSTAGE  
WOMAN 2 / SARAH

For larger productions the following roles have been added:

STUDENT 1 (female)  
STUDENT 2 (male)  
ADDITIONAL STUDENTS  
FAMILY UNITS  
SETTLER 1  
SETTLER 2  
CHILD 1  
CHILD 2  
SETTLER 3

### MUSICAL NUMBERS

Traveling On . . . . . Johnny, Chorus  
Old-time Discipline. . . . . School Marm Proctor, Company  
Putting Up the Apples for the Wintertime. Sarah, Company  
The Indian Song (instrumental)  
Angel on My Shoulder . . . . . Johnny, Abigail, Ezra  
Seize the Moment . . . . . Johnny, Chorus  
I Am the Sunshine . . . . . Johnny, Company  
Traveling On—Reprise: . . . . . Ezra, Company  
I Am the Sunshine—Reprise . . . . . Company

## JOHNNY APPLESEED

*SETTING: An apple orchard with small stools, crates and various apple baskets. LIGHTS out. MUSIC: TRAVELING ON. Enter JOHNNY. JOHNNY always carries an apple or two in his bag. LIGHTS up slowly.*

JOHNNY. “An apple a day, keeps...” Oh, never mind. I’m sure you know the rest of the quote. You do know it, don’t you? “An apple a day keeps...” What?... (*AUDIENCE responds with JOHNNY.*) “The doctor away!” Happens to be true. In any case, allow me to introduce myself; my name is Chapman, John Chapman. Perhaps you know me by the name “Johnny Appleseed.” I’ve been told my tin pan hat is famous! But take it from me... a tin pan hat is practical. I didn’t have any room in my knapsack for this thing, what with all the seeds I was always carrying! Couldn’t leave it behind, had to have something in which to cook my mush! Then I remembered what my momma would tell me in times of great frustration...

FEMALE VOICE OFFSTAGE. “John Chapman, use your head!”

JOHNNY. So that’s what I did. I used my head for a pot-holder! Didn’t take up one bit of room in my knapsack, and it also kept the rain and snow off my head.



And I'm here to tell you today it don't make no never mind how old a child you are, every now and then you got to admit that Momma was right. It's the truth! Momma used to tell me something else too, and I reckon I've gone this far in my life without forgetting it, so I will share it with you. She always used to say ...

**FEMALE VOICE OFFSTAGE.** "You're in this world for a reason, boy...there are great things out there for every child to do, Johnny."

**JOHNNY.** And I wondered to myself, "But I am just a boy, what great things can one boy do?" And it was like my momma heard what I was thinking... Did you ever feel like that?... Like your momma knew what you were thinking? (*AUDIENCE response as MUSIC fades out.*) That's when she would always say ...

**FEMALE VOICE OFFSTAGE.** "Keep a gentle heart, son, a smile on your face, and be kind to every man. As you travel on, never forget those who have less than you. You will be all the richer for it, Johnny."

**JOHNNY.** I promised my mother right then and there I would do just that. And the time finally did come when I left my home in Massachusetts. I packed up ten pounds of apple seeds, kissed Momma and Poppa goodbye and started traveling west to plant food for those pioneers that were sure to follow.

**(MUSIC 1: "TRAVELING ON")**

*(Backgrounds sung by CHORUS [CAST] offstage.)*

**JOHNNY.**

**TRAVELING ON,  
TRAVELING ON.**

AS LONG AS THE SUN KEEPS SHINING I'M  
TRAVELING ON.

OVER THE MOUNTAINS, INTO THE VALLEY  
PLANTING LIFE ALONG THE WAY.  
TRAVELING THROUGH THE SUMMER OF MY  
DAYS.

TRAVELING ON, (TRAVELING ON)  
TRAVELING ON. (TRAVELING ON)  
THINKING OF MY FRIENDS BEHIND ME, I'M  
TRAVELING ON.

I'VE GOT TO MAKE SURE I LEAVE THE DOOR  
OPEN WIDE FOR MY FRIENDS.  
GUESS I'LL BE TRAVELING ON UNTIL THE END.

EVERYONE IS BORN WITH A REASON.  
I'M NO DIFFERENT THAN YOU.  
EVERYDAY, THROUGHOUT EVERY SEASON,  
WE ARE JUDGED BY THE THINGS WE DO.

I WOULD LIKE TO LEAVE THIS WORLD A  
BETTER PLACE  
FOR THOSE I MAY NEVER KNOW.  
KEEP THAT IN MIND FOR THE REST OF YOUR  
TIME,  
AND MY, HOW THIS EARTH WILL GROW.

SINGING A SONG, (SINGING A SONG)  
MOVING ALONG. (MOVING ALONG)  
TOMORROW'S GONNA BE A BRAND NEW DAY.

**JUST ONE APPLE SEED TO GROW ONE APPLE  
TREE;  
WHEN I'M GONE PART OF ME WILL STAY.  
YOU MIGHT THINK ABOUT ME WHEN YOU  
COME THIS WAY.**

**TRAVELING ON, (TRAVELING ON)  
TRAVELING ON. (TRAVELING ON)  
AS LONG AS THE SUN KEEPS SHINING I'M  
TRAVELING ON.**

**OVER THE MOUNTAINS, INTO THE VALLEY  
PLANTING LIFE ALONG THE WAY.  
TRAVELING THROUGH THE SUMMER OF MY  
DAYS.**

**TRAVELING ON,  
TRAVELING ON. (TRAVELING ON)**

**TRAVELING ON,  
TRAVELING ON. (TRAVELING ON)**

**TRAVELING ON.**

*(MUSIC out.)*

JOHNNY. It is a dream come true to live and work in this life at something you love. I recommend it to each and every one of you. And there are so many people who are eager to teach and help you along your way. Why, my real knowledge of apples started long ago when I was a just a small boy. It all started with a farmer named James Trueblood.

*(Enter JAMES TRUEBLOOD carrying apple basket.)*

TRUEBLOOD. You! You there, young man! Are you John Chapman?

JOHNNY. Yes, I am, Mr. Trueblood. I heard you needed help to tend your apple orchard.

TRUEBLOOD. That I do. I have spoken with your mother and father. They have assured me you are a dependable young man...

JOHNNY. That I am!

TRUEBLOOD. ...Honest as well?

JOHNNY. As the day is long!

TRUEBLOOD. Everyone in this territory says that about you. I just wanted to hear it from yourself, John Chapman. I am also in need of someone to help at the mill... pressing cider.

JOHNNY. You've got the right person, Mr. Trueblood, sir! I want to learn all I can about apples. Everybody knows you've got the best orchard in these parts. What better man than James Trueblood from which to learn?

TRUEBLOOD. Then I'll be willing to teach you everything I know...just like my uncle, Angus MacIntosh, taught me many years ago. I'll teach you as long as you do a full day's work every Saturday. That is all I ask.

JOHNNY. I'm willing to work hard and learn, sir.

TRUEBLOOD. In that case, John Chapman, I shall ask you something Uncle Mac asked me to do when I was a boy.

JOHNNY. What's that, sir?

TRUEBLOOD. He dreamed that one day he and I would return to the Bay Colony and start west again planting apple seeds. He remembered when, as a small child, the Trueblood family first came to Massachusetts...and how

excited everyone would get when they came upon an apple tree in the wilderness. They had food again! Something delicious, lasting for weeks and months, to send them on their journey.

JOHNNY. Oh my goodness! Nothing has changed, sir. The same thing happened to my family as well. When we came upon an apple tree, Father said it was truly our lucky day!

TRUEBLOOD. Seeing an apple tree in the middle of a golden field is one of this earth's most beautiful sights.

JOHNNY. Did you do it, Mr. Trueblood?

TRUEBLOOD. Did I do what, John Chapman?

JOHNNY. Go back to the Bay Colony with your uncle and start west again planting apple trees?

TRUEBLOOD. I am sorry to say, it was a dream I was never to realize.

JOHNNY. Why not, Mr. Trueblood?

TRUEBLOOD. By the time I was old enough I had orchards to tend for my father and soon a family of my own for which to care. A father must see to it that his family is fed. One cannot do that while traveling the wilderness planting trees for others. No, it was just a dream ... just a crazy dream. But enough about that. Come along, we'll start at the back orchard. That's where the MacIntosh apples are! Follow me, John Chapman. (*Exit JAMES TRUEBLOOD.*)

JOHNNY. Yes, sir, Mr. Trueblood! ... As a young boy I worked alongside James Trueblood every Saturday for more than three years. Almost everything I know about apples I learned from him. I learned all about MacIntosh apples, five different colors of red apples, and even three

kinds of yellow ones! More apples than you could shake a stick at!

It was also at that time more and more settlers were arriving and heading west. Most people had next to nothing but their families in those wagons. I wanted to help my fellow man in any way I could. So I decided to go west myself and plant apple trees along the way so the settlers would have something to eat. You might say it was my way of thanking James Trueblood for everything he taught me. It was the best thing I had ever done! And how I loved tending trees for others! It just made me feel good.

In my travels I was most blessed to meet some very fine people. Now don't get me wrong, like everybody else, I was cursed to meet a couple of real stinkers, too! But, all in all, I still find that most people are pretty dag-gone nice. Don't you? (*AUDIENCE response.*) Sure we do! And you can learn from anybody. As a matter of fact, you should! I've got to say I learned a lot from my favorite teacher, School Marm Proctor. (*JOHNNY places and apple on "desk."*)

She was the only teacher my classmates and I ever had. She was my teacher for more than seven years! We were all ages, all sizes in that one-room schoolhouse. Everybody helped each other too. And as mean as I thought School Marm Proctor was then, I look back on her now and I say "thank you." Mostly because there was this one thing about her...she loved apples too! She used

them in lessons every time she could. And every morning when she would come in and she would say ...

*(Enter SCHOOL MARM PROCTOR ringing school bell. SCHOOL MARM discovers the apple on desk.)*

SCHOOL MARM. Good morning, young John Chapman.

JOHNNY *(attentive and eager to please)*. A good morning to you too, School Marm Proctor.

SCHOOL MARM. You wouldn't be the one who left an apple for me, would you? *(JOHNNY is embarrassed.)*

Thank you, John. I see you are the first to arrive, once again, for your daily lessons. *(SCHOOL MARM looks through daily lessons.)*

JOHNNY *(to AUDIENCE)*. The truth of the matter is I was terrified to show up late. So I would always cross my fingers and tell her the same little fib... "I really like being here, School Marm Proctor."

SCHOOL MARM. I can't say the same for the rest of your classmates. Where are they?

JOHNNY. They were right behind me ... Perhaps they were sidetracked by a deer in the forest or a bear in the woods. I'm sure they will be here any minute.

SCHOOL MARM *(ringing bell and calling for missing students)*. Students! Students! Come along at once! There is a schedule to maintain!

*(Enter STUDENTS, ELI, WOMAN 1 and WOMAN 2, and ADDITIONAL STUDENTS, if applicable, slowly chatting and laughing amongst themselves.)*

SCHOOL MARM. Well, aren't we delighted we could make an appearance for our morning lessons? What do we have to say for ourselves?

ELI. "WE" thought about going fishing, but "WE" came here instead.

*(STUDENTS including JOHNNY laugh.)*

SCHOOL MARM. You're late! Where have the lot of you been?

WOMAN 1. I was with him.

ELI. I was with her.

WOMAN 2. I was with them.

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*(Segments between lines are for ADDITIONAL CAST MEMBERS, when applicable. Otherwise, cut this section.)*

SCHOOL MARM. And you, young lady, I want to hear your excuse for dillydallying.

STUDENT 1. My excuse for dillydallying?

SCHOOL MARM. Precisely.

STUDENT 1. I'm sorry, School Marm Proctor. I think I just lost track of time.

SCHOOL MARM. Lost track of time?!

STUDENT 2. That's nothing! I lost my pocket watch three weeks ago. So now I have really lost track of time!

*(ALL STUDENTS laugh.)*

SCHOOL MARM. That will be enough from you, young man. And the rest of you... What do you have to say for yourselves?



STUDENTS. We're sorry, School Marm Proctor.

*(End additional segment.)*

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WOMAN 1. Forgive us for being late, School Marm Proctor.

WOMAN 2. We promise, it won't happen again.

ELI. Not until tomorrow!

*(STUDENTS including JOHNNY laugh.)*

SCHOOL MARM. Take your seats and mind your manners or you shall all be put in stocks!

ALL sans SCHOOL MARM *(horrified)*. No!

*(ALL sans JOHNNY freeze.)*

JOHNNY *(to AUDIENCE)*. Do you know what "stocks" are? *(AUDIENCE response.)* Well, the "stocks" were set right out in front of the schoolyard. There were several pieces of wood with holes in them big enough for your head, your hands and your feet.

*(STUDENTS sans JOHNNY mime "stocks.")*

WOMAN 1. They'd put your hands in two holes and clamp them down.

ALL sans SCHOOL MARM. Boom!

ELI. Then they'd put your feet in two more holes and clamp them down too!

ALL sans SCHOOL MARM. Boom!