

# Christmas Holiday Death Toll Stands at 217 Throughout Nation

## IT SEEMS TO ME

By Charles F. Simpson

The state library board has endorsed legislation to validate as public records microfilm reproductions of documents. At present the original document is of course valid, also photostat copies of originals. Microfilm is the method of photographing the original on narrow strip film to be reproduced by a projection machine. This method is not yet legal; or rather the law does not authorize this as a method of preserving records.

Microfilm is however fast coming into use in this field. Beginning with 1946, The Statesman is recording its daily issues on microfilm. Soon we shall microfilm the back files under the system the master film is retained in the Eastman laboratories at Rochester. All film copies may be made at any time in the number desired. The advantage of microfilming is that it gives a duplicate of the original, but occupies only a fraction of space of the original. Thus a small cabinet of roll film would contain the whole file of The Statesman for its 95 years of publication (though unfortunately we do not have a complete file).

In the case of modern newspaper too, the film, especially with the original preserved more durable, for our woodpulp paper quickly shows its age and deteriorates. Use of film in reference is also more convenient than dragging out old and often dusty or decrepit files.

In the case of public documents, where the indexing is accurate (Continued on editorial page)

## Eventual Total to Top 300

The Christmas holiday death toll throughout the nation mounted to 217 late last night, including 133 traffic deaths, and the national safety council said the "eventual highway toll" would be considerably more than 300.

The "eventual toll," a spokesman said, included those injured in holiday accidents who did not die immediately.

The council said the nation "apparently went on a traffic binge" as a result of fine holiday weather prevailing through most of the country, and estimated the eventual toll of this year's holiday would surpass 1941, which was marked by the largest number of Christmas traffic deaths in history.

150 Estimated  
The council previously had estimated that there would be 150 traffic deaths in the nation for the holiday period.

California with 52 accidental deaths, all but two in an epidemic of highway crashes, topped the country in the gruesome statistical list.

Meanwhile authorities pressed a search for an airliner with 12 persons aboard reported missing in the Laguna mountains near San Diego.

Toll by States  
The toll by states, from 6 p. m. (local time) Tuesday:

Alabama 2 traffic deaths, 0 miscellaneous; Arizona 2, 0; Arkansas 0, 2; California 50, 2; Colorado 2, 0; Connecticut 1, 0; Florida 3, 1; Georgia 5, 1; Illinois 18, 5; Indiana 10, 1; Iowa 2, 1; Kansas 2, 0; Louisiana 2, 0; Maine 3, 1; Maryland 6, 0; Massachusetts 3, 0; Michigan 8, 2; Minnesota 3, 0; Missouri 2, 0; Nebraska 1, 0; New Jersey 2, 1; New Mexico 3, 0; New York 9, 2; North Dakota 1, 0; Ohio 6, 1; Oklahoma 4, 0; Oregon 3, 1; Pennsylvania 5, 3; Tennessee 8, 0; Texas 2, 0; Vermont 1, 0; Washington 4, 1; West Virginia 5, 1; Wisconsin 4, 2; District of Columbia 0, 1.

California accident story on page 5

## Final Bow



PASADENA, Calif., Dec. 25—W. C. Fields, long-time comedian, who died today at the age of 64. Fields is shown above in the movie role of Micawber in Dickens' "David Copperfield." It was said to be the only part he ever played without ad libbing the script.

The comedian whose deadpan gestures, raspy remarks and "never give a sucker an even break" characterization made him a showman beloved the nation over, died today. He was 64.

## Illness Fatal To Comedian W. C. Fields

PASADENA, Calif., Dec. 25—W. C. Fields, the bulbous-nosed comedian whose deadpan gestures, raspy remarks and "never give a sucker an even break" characterization made him a showman beloved the nation over, died today. He was 64.

The man who was born Claude William Dunkinfield in Philadelphia January 29, 1880, succumbed at Las Encinas sanitarium, where he had been a patient for 14 months. Death occurred at 12:03 p. m. He had been critically ill for several weeks.

Fields' appreciation of good liquor and his reported fabulous capacity for it became practically his trademark, especially in quips and jibes on radio shows such as his famous feuding appearances with Edgar Bergen's Charlie McCarthy.

Noted Ad Libber  
He was equally well-known in show business for his ad libbing and complete disregard of prepared scripts, either in the movies or radio. Once he said that the only lines he followed truly were those of Charlie Dickens.

Fields left home and school at 11, existed for four years on odd jobs and then, having practiced juggling for as much as 16 hours a day, got his first job in show business at a summer park in Norristown, Pa. at \$5 a week.

He went into vaudeville and after tours abroad came under the banner of Florenz Ziegfeld. In the Ziegfeld Follies, Fields worked for 10 years with such illustrious name comedians as Eddie Cantor, Ed Wynn, Will Rogers, Fanny Brice and Bert Williams.

## 4 Fatal Accidents In State

Four persons lost their lives in holiday accidents in Oregon Christmas eve and Christmas day. No injuries were caused by Salem traffic.

A 19-year-old bride of six months, Mrs. Agnes Moore, died of gun wounds accidentally inflicted at her home in Reedsport the night before Christmas.

A pedestrian was killed Christmas eve at Astoria and auto accidents fatally injured two other persons on Christmas day, one at Pendleton, the other at Klamath Falls.

Driver Free on Bail  
Main exception to traffic tranquility in Salem during the Christmas holiday occurred when a car driven by Milton Larson, Silverton, crashed into a city police car at about 2:30 a. m. Christmas day, city police reported.

Larson was released after posting \$250 bail on a charge of driving while intoxicated.

Policemen J. J. Scheutz and Leonard E. Skinner were investigating another accident in the Portland road underpass when Larson's vehicle hit the parked police car. The car was not seriously damaged to put it out of use.

Victor L. Olson, jr., route 1, Salem, and Donald MacLinnis of Oregon City were drivers of the two cars which originally collided at the underpass.

An auto driven by John Russell Huffman, 3260 Portland rd., collided last night on highway 99E with a car operated by Lawrence Jasmin, 147 N. Commercial st., when Jasmin, traveling north, attempted to turn left into the Hayesville auto courts. Huffman was going south.

Cars driven by Charles K. Mills, 1680 S. Winter st., and Clyde Holt Clark, Hollywood, Calif., collided early yesterday morning at Capitol and Madison streets, city police reported.

Scattered Violence  
PORTLAND, Ore., Dec. 25—(AP) A fire, traffic mishaps and scattered violence were discordant notes in an otherwise quiet Christmas observance here.

A two-story rooming house suffered \$2,500 damage when fire spread from a day-snooper to a Christmas tree. J. R. Anderson, 49, jumped from a second-floor window and fractured a heel, Fred Morris, 25, was burned in attempting to extinguish the blaze.

J. P. Hayward, Vancouver, was taken to a hospital with pistol wounds. Deputy sheriffs said they were told he tried to crash a party with a butcher knife.

Woman Shoots at Husband  
A woman called police and said her husband shot at her because she refused to get out of bed and make him a beef sandwich at 12:20 a. m. The husband said it was an accident—and anyway the shots missed.

An early morning thief smashed a plate glass window and stole \$12 watches valued at \$234. A Christmas eve holdup at a grocery store netted two men between \$400 and \$500.

From early Christmas eve to early Christmas morning 80 traffic mishaps, injuring 12 persons, were reported. Seven drunken driving charges were filed.

## Bankruptcies Low in Oregon

PORTLAND, Ore., Dec. 25—(AP) Fewer bankruptcies were filed in Oregon in 1946 than in any year since a uniform system was established in 1898. Estes Sneedcor, chief of the federal bankruptcy office for the state, reported today.

Up to December 24 there were 213 bankruptcy petitions, nearly 100 fewer than last year, he said. The total was about 800 below the average yearly for the past 48 years.

Sneedcor said the largest number in any one year was 1,500, filed in the first year of the depression.

## Fall from Theatre Balcony Wins Bet

SEATTLE, Dec. 25—(AP)—Quince Carroll, theater janitor, won a bet early today by coming close to death when he did so.

Carroll fell 25 feet from a balcony in the Coliseum theater, landing across a row of first floor seats and suffering critical head injuries and undetermined internal injuries.

Police said Carroll had placed a wager with another employee he could lean further over the balcony rail than anyone else.

Auto Thief Collides With Car's Owner

HOLLYWOOD, Dec. 25—(AP)—His own car having been stolen from his home, Mason Nurick borrowed a neighbor's automobile to drive to the Hollywood police station and turn in a report today.

# The Oregon Statesman

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## 76 DIE IN SHANGHAI AIRPLANE CRASHES

## Airliner Reported Sighted

SAN DIEGO, Calif., Dec. 25 (AP)—Sheriff's deputies reported tonight that an unspecified search plane, hunting for an overdue Western Airliner with nine passengers and a crew of three aboard, had sighted what its pilot believed to be the wreckage of a big transport near La Posta, about 60 miles southeast of here.

There was no verification of the report, and darkness and lowering weather kept ground parties from an immediate investigation. The sheriff's office said it was either a navy or a coast guard plane which radioed in the report.

Search had been discontinued for the night except for eight horsemen, led by Rudy Frowns, El Centro, Calif., brother-in-law of Edgar Martin, reportedly one of the passengers on the ship which disappeared last night.

The Red Cross had two mobile units about three miles from the point where the fliers reported seeing what they believed to be wreckage.

Hunt Near Standstill  
Otherwise the hunt was at a standstill, after a coast guard flier had radioed that a silver-colored airplane tail sighted through a cloud gap had been identified as that of an old wreck.

Further air search for the airliner, now 24 hours overdue here with 12 aboard, was halted for the day by storm and approaching night.

It was M. J. Stouffer, pilot of a coast guard PBM plane which glimpsed the silver tail near Mt. Laguna, about 50 miles east of here, said on arrival at the air station that he checked observation had satisfied him the wreckage was old.

To Resume Tomorrow  
The coast guard station said at 4 p. m. that its five planes were being held as they came in and would not resume the hunt until daylight tomorrow.

Western Air Lines also announced an end of the air hunt for today.

Grand parties, which were investigating various reports, were expected to pause also for the night at the nearest mountain communities.

There were nine passengers and three crew members aboard the airliner when it vanished over the cloud-covered Laguna mountains on Christmas eve.

The search had been concentrated on the mountain area, just north of the border, after various persons reported sighting a fire at about the time the plane disappeared after a final radio report at 7:09 p. m.

28 Lost in Prior Crash  
Mt. Laguna is near Thing Mountain, on which the earlier search had concentrated and on which another airliner crashed last March 3 with the loss of 28 lives. The missing plane was on a short triangle run from Los Angeles to San Diego by the way of Imperial valley when it disappeared.

## Crash Second Tragedy for Stewardess

SALT LAKE CITY, Dec. 25—(AP)—For the second Christmas of her life Mitzi Dunn Gibson, a Western Airline stewardess, today was faced with airborne tragedy.

The fiancée of First Officer Richard J. Weber, co-pilot of W. A. L. plane missing in Southern California, recalled today that just two years ago her husband, James Edward Gibson, an army pilot, was killed when his ship crashed at Menlo, Mo.

The stewardess and Weber were to have been married next May. One of her co-workers, Stewardess Elaine Mulcahy, said the co-pilot of the lost ship had planned a surprise visit to Salt Lake today to visit the girl he planned to marry.

Instead, his Christmas present to her—a cedar chest—arrived along with the news that the ship he was on was lost.

FIRE DESTROYS BARRACKS  
NAGOYA, Japan, Thursday, Dec. 26—(AP)—One U. S. soldier was burned to death and another was injured seriously in a fire which destroyed barracks of the First Air Force at Komaki air-drome Sunday, the army announced today.

## Full Stockings, Sunny Skies Mark Salem Yule

Unusually beautiful weather, full gift stockings, and traditionally bountiful Christmas dinners marked the passing of Christmas day in Salem.

The streets of downtown Salem were practically deserted during the day, and the sidewalks were littered with the refuse of Tuesday's hectic, last day shopping by the crowds of worn shoppers. In some store windows the annual clearance sale signs were already posted. In the evening crowds of pleasure seekers filled the streets but the streets were still relatively empty as fog descended over the downtown area last night.

Mid-night services at many Salem churches drew record crowds Christmas eve.

Sales records across the nation show that this Christmas was one of the plushest in American history, and Salem apparently followed suit.

With crisp, sunny weather, travel in Salem and Oregon was great and accidents were few. Bus and train stations were jammed with holiday travelers going to and coming from reunions with friends and relatives.

## President Truman, King George Express World's Peace Hopes

Thousands of worshippers, some of them British troops on leave from their job of guarding the troubled Holy Land, knelt in solemn Christmas rites yesterday at the Bethlehem grotto erected to mark the birthplace of the infant Jesus.

While the faithful gathered in the historic Church of the Nativity, cold waves swept many parts of war-ravaged Europe.

The storms, plus food and fuel shortages, added to the day's bleakness for the continent's hungry millions.

But the yule day also brought hopeful expressions from two world leaders.

President Truman, celebrating the day with his family in Missouri, told the nation before his departure from the capital that a "good start toward peace" already had been made.

King George, in his annual Christmas message to his subjects throughout the world, promised that "better days lie ahead."

Partisans temporarily placed aside worries over the new fourth republic's future and the fighting in Indo-China and celebrated the day with a gaily reminiscent of pre-war years.

Over the ruins of shattered Berlin, snow fell and American troops gave yule parties for tens of thousands of German children. The day brought reminders of the undercurrent of strife in the Holy Land and long police lines stood guard along the road to Bethlehem.

In Jerusalem shops were fired into the air by a few Christian Arabs. Minutes later the city bristled with guns and armored cars.

## This Yule Present No Pink Elephant

HOLLYWOOD, Dec. 25—(AP)—When Chet Lauck woke up this morning he wished he hadn't.

On his front lawn was a 50-year-old elephant. The pachyderm bore a sign: "Merry Xmas to the Laucks."

The elephant was sent by W. C. Stroube, a Corvallis merchant. Tex Stroube likes to do that sort of thing. Last Christmas he sent Lauck, known to radio listeners as "Lum" of "Lum and Abner," a parrot. Year before it was a nondescript bird.

## 4 Die as Car Hits Crowd

NEW WESTMINSTER, B. C., Dec. 25—(CP)—Four persons are dead today following a Christmas eve traffic accident in the fog-shrouded downtown district.

Mr. and Mrs. James Jones of nearby Maillardville and Mrs. Mabel McKnight were instantly killed. Mrs. McKnight's husband, Hugh, died in a hospital today.

Police said that the Jones automobile was in collision with a truck driven by Thor Steinson.

The car then careened into a crowd of bystanders, striking Mr. and Mrs. McKnight. Mrs. McKnight's body was thrown through a drug-store window by the impact.

## 3 Planes Down in Thick Fog

SHANGHAI, Dec. 26—(AP)—Seventy-six persons were killed in three airplane crashes in the vicinity of Shanghai yesterday. The planes belonged to the Central Air Transport Corp., a Chinese concern.

The fatalities made Christmas the blackest day in China's civilian flying history.

Twelve planes from different provinces tried to reach Shanghai but in the heavy fog three crashed, eight were unable to land and turned back. One is missing and possibly met disaster.

The missing plane is owned by the Chinese National Aviation corp., the country's leading air line.

The Shanghai Press said the known toll is 76 killed, 10 missing and 18 seriously injured.

In addition, one farmer was killed and four were wounded when one of the crashed planes hit a farm near Wansung. The planes were loaded with mail.

All persons killed in the three crashes were unofficially reported to be Chinese, but one paper listed one American among the injured and described him as a mechanic.

## Mrs. Hawks 'Best Dressed' Woman in 1946

NEW YORK, Dec. 25—(AP)—Title of the best dressed woman in the world goes this year to Mrs. Howard Hawks, wife of the Hollywood producer, who nosed out the Duchess of Windsor for top place in the annual list of the "ten best dressed."

The 1946-47 list, based on a poll of 150 fashion editors, stylists and social celebrities, was announced by the New York dress institute in this order: 1—Mrs. Howard Hawks, 2—Duchess of Windsor, 3—Mrs. Cushing Mortimer (former Barbara Cushing), 4—Mrs. Vincent Astor and Mrs. John Hay Whitney, 5—Mrs. Thomas Shelvein, 6—Mrs. Millie Rogers, 7—Mrs. Harrison Williams, 8—Mrs. William Rhinelandier Stewart, 9—Mrs. William Paley, 10—Mrs. Clare Booth Luce.

The duchess, who once topped the annual list, dropped to 10th place last year but climbed to second place this year.

## Yule Tree Fire Imperils Five

SEATTLE, Dec. 25—(AP)—A Christmas tree flash fire that quickly spread through the living room of a residence here today imperiled the lives of a mother and four small children.

One of the children suffered minor burns and the mother, Mrs. Ruth Paul, 26, was badly singed about the head when she ran through the flaming living room shielding her baby with her body.

Liana Paul, 8½, who was standing near the tree when the Christmas tree lights shorted and quickly set the dry fir tree afire, suffered a hand burn.

Firemen confined the blaze to the living room.

## Rep. Rankin to Launch Inquiry Into 'Pink' College Professors

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25—(AP)—Rep. Rankin (D-Miss.) today outlined a congressional investigation of what he called "pink professors" as one of the first tasks of the new session and called upon veterans organizations and civic groups to lend a hand.

Rankin, a member of the house committee on un-American activities, told reporters an investigation of alleged subversive influences in some of the leading educational institutions will be one of the first undertaken by the group in the new congress.

"One of its main problems will be to enlist the aid of patriotic organizations, including veterans groups, to drive from our educational institutions those pink professors who are now being subsidized from questionable sources," he said.

Rankin reported voluminous evidence that professors of "questionable loyalties" are holding positions in which "they can influence the minds of our young people."

Some, he added, receive a large part of their pay from "so-called foundations and are spreading subversive propaganda among the students of this nation." He did not identify them.

Other investigations which the committee probably will start early in 1947, Rankin said, will cover the moving picture industry, the radio and "other methods of communication."

"The committee will intensify its drive and its efforts to remove from the federal payroll every Communist and every other subversive individual," he said.

## Mrs. Oehler, Leslie Land In New York

Irene Oehler, British bride of Harry Oehler, Silverton veteran, arrived with her son, Leslie, in New York City on Christmas day, according to the Associated Press.

Twenty-three other British brides of American veterans arrived in New York City after an arduous trans-atlantic plane trip, with 23 other British brides of American veterans and their 24 children. Weather conditions caused many delays.

The plane arrived at LaGuardia field about 45 hours after the first takeoff from London on Monday. On the second try, the plane landed at Shannon but because weather over the North Atlantic was reported to be bad, it went south to Santa Maria in the Azores.

From Santa Maria, the ship took off for North America, over-passed Gander, Newfoundland, and landed at Moncton, New Brunswick.

Each wife had one child except Mrs. Nellie Allen, wife of Clifford Allen of Bay Ninette, Alabama, a former private in the medical corps. Mrs. Allen brought two children, Michael, one year and eight months, and Norman, eight months old.

Six of the wives were met by their husbands, the remainder being taken to Fort Hamilton in Brooklyn by an army bus.

## Chinese Pass Constitution

NANKING, Dec. 25—(AP)—After a decade of delay caused by war and internal discord, China has today adopted a new constitution which vests sovereignty in the people and guarantees their rights.

The document was formally adopted today by the national assembly, still minus representatives of an important segment of the people—the communists who have split with the central government.

A coalition government, instead of the present one-party rule, will be set up under the new charter, which becomes effective a year from today.

## Animal Crackers



"Turn the brim down—you look silly."

## Red Ships Sail For Antarctic

MOSCOW, Dec. 25—(AP)—A 10-ship whaling flotilla, headed by the well-known Soviet explorer, G. I. Semyonov, departed from northern Russia today for the Antarctic. Russian newspapers reported.

The fleet, composed of nine whalers and one large vessel carrying equipment, will be met off the Gibraltar by the Soviet tanker Pamin, which will supply the ships with fuel during the voyage.

Oil, uranium and old claims to Antarctic ownership all have been mentioned in connection with the unprecedented number of scientific and whaling expeditions to the Antarctic during the current southern summer.

## Hotel Blaze in Macon Believed Work of Arsonist

MACON, Ga., Dec. 25—(AP)—City police and fire officials said today they were investigating evidences of arson in a spectacular early morning blaze that destroyed a wing of the Lanier hotel and sent an estimated 200 guests scurrying into the streets.

Three persons were slightly injured by the flames that broke out shortly before midnight, apparently in a fourth floor linen closet that had been inspected 20 minutes before the smoke was discovered.

Fire Chief Guy Mosely said, "This thing didn't happen if it occurred," and Assistant Chief Jerry Hudson connected the fire with the Wincoff hotel disaster in Atlanta Dec. 7 which resulted in intimations of arson before a grand jury last week.

## 1947 Building Boom Forecast With Federal Controls Lifted

WASHINGTON, Dec. 25—(AP)—Industry and government officials tonight forecast record-smashing construction activity in 1947, the commerce department predicting nearly \$22,000,000,000 worth of building of all kinds.

The Associated General Contractors of America, Inc., agreeing that builders would hit the \$20,000,000,000 mark, estimated \$15,000,000,000 would be in new construction, the rest in long-delayed repair and maintenance work.

This would far exceed the previous peak in 1942, when the craft race for military installations and war plants was in full swing and the government was doing two-thirds of the building.

Private industry now is performing nearly 80 per cent of all construction, which this year will amount to about \$15,000,000,000, according to the commerce department.

Its construction division, at work on detailed analysis of the 1947 outlook for issuance next week, said it now appears the total will run between \$21,500,000,000 and

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## Lawyer Chokes to Death on Turkey

ROSLYN, N. Y., Dec. 25—(AP)—Harold C. Vaughan, 38-year-old New York attorney, told a family gathering he was no expert at cutting a turkey and excused himself today from the Christmas dinner table to do the carving in the kitchen.

Minutes later he was heard coughing. His father, Dr. Harold S. Vaughan, an oral surgeon, went to the kitchen and found his son choking on a piece of turkey.

The attorney died before he could be taken to a hospital.

## Bankruptcies Low in Oregon

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