

# EDITORIAL . . . . .

## Really, 'Tis Better . . .

This is the season of the year when one feels kindly towards all mankind. Now we feel the spirit of peace on earth, good will towards men and harbor a desire to bring happiness to family and friends. Differences, little or big, real or imagined, are laid aside for the time being and smiles replace scowls or light up disinterested countenances. It is the happy Christmas time! If only that same spirit could be maintained throughout the year the differences between the peoples of the earth could be ironed out with less friction than the world has been witnessing for to these many years.

It is this spirit that prompts our people to give generously to relieve the suffering among peoples of foreign lands, to help renew their faith in humanity and strengthen their belief in God, albeit some of these peoples were our bitter enemies but a matter of months ago.

There is a lesson in the Christmas season to guide our actions throughout the year. If we accept the principle that "it is more blessed to give than to receive" and act accordingly we are making progress towards world peace, for it seems diplomacy has failed to accomplish that which a stricken world desires and must have if civilization is to survive. The Christian world has faith in the teachings of the Man of Galilee and there is a growing belief that the world will not be led out of disorder and confusion so long as there are rulers and leading classes who fail to recognize the one great leader of all mankind.

## Weather Influences Accidents

Users of public highways are reminded by Secretary of State Earl T. Newbry that the Christ-

mas holidays are expected to be the heaviest traveled in history, as he issues a warning to both car drivers and pedestrians to exercise caution. December is consistently the worst month for accidents of the entire year, and the Christmas holidays the worst time in December, the secretary points out.

That there has been a drop of thirty-three percent in fatalities on the highways of Oregon the first ten months of the year may be attributed somewhat to the type of weather. The state traffic department's records show that accidents throughout the state took 25 lives in November, lowest death toll for that month in three years. Not all of these deaths can be attributed to weather conditions, for there is always an element of intoxicating liquor to take into consideration, but the fact remains that Oregon weather, except for the highest areas, has been mild up to the present, with rains prevailing even over a large part of eastern Oregon. As the holiday season opens it is still mild, with occasional light showers of rain in the lower levels and perhaps mild snowfall in the mountains.

Any upswing in the death toll during this month will not be attributable so much to weather conditions as to the foolishness of drivers, unless there is a sudden turn for the worse during the time when the highways will be crowded.

Along with the many other things we look forward to at Christmas time is the return of the young people from the colleges. Heppner has quite a class of these young people who are training themselves for the task of carrying on the leadership of tomorrow and the brief pauses they make in their work to drop in on the folks at home brings a note of cheer to an otherwise placid daily routine.

As we observe it, Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Christ, and of the foundation of a religion which proclaims one of the foremost philosophies of human conduct.

However, the roots of Christmas observance go deeply into the folklore of the Druids, Egyptians, Romans, Scandinavians, English and Germans. What we know of the ancient Christmas finds full flower in the past and present customs of our own homes and those of our ancestors.

A few of the most frequently observed Christmas customs in America have been selected for the enjoyment of our readers at this time.

### THE INDOOR CHRISTMAS TREE

Although, according to legend, the fir tree goes back to Eve, it was not until the time of Martin Luther that the evergreen was used as an indoor decoration in celebration of Christmas.

It is said that the Story of the Nativity had always appealed to Luther, and one Christmas Eve as he wandered through the woods, he became enamored with the wonder of the night. He cut a small snow-laden fir tree, and set it up in his home for his children. He illuminated it with candles to represent the stars.

It was not until 1604 that, in Strassburg, the first Christmas tree appeared in literature.

### CHRISTMAS BELLS

Legend has it that when Christ was born, Satan died, and that the bell in the church was rung. At exactly midnight the tolling changed to a joyful peal, announcing the birth of Christ.

William Auld in "Christmas Traditions" says: "In the dark chambers (bellies) high above the turmoil and strife of human life, dwelt the Apostles of Peace, whose salutations were never so welcome as at the time of the great Winter feasts of Christmas."

### POINSETTIAS

The poinsettia has no Christmas legend connected with the sentiment of the people at Christmas time, except in Spain where it is known as the Flor de Noche-buena. Its beautiful flaming star is one of the beautiful flowers of the Christmas season, and its use as an indoor decoration is universal.

### THE PLUM PUDDING

An indispensable old-time English Christmas dish was frumenty, or frumenty, which according to old-time recipes was "wheat boiled till the grains burst, then strained and boiled again with broth or milk and yolks of eggs." Frumenty was the forerunner to Plum Pudding.

In the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England, the prayer for the Last Sunday before Advent began with the words "Stir up." The people of Peterborough took this to be a reminder that they should start their plum pudding at that time, and everybody in the family took a hand in the stirring until it was ready on Christmas.

### CAROL SINGING

The first of all Christmas Carols was that sung in the Heavens by the Angels, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth, Peace, good will toward men." Historically, many say that St. Francis of Assisi was the first to make the carol popular. There can be no doubt but that carols are the layman's most beautiful contribution to his religion.

The real beginning of carol singing was in the 15th century in England, and has been fostered by them and North Americans ever since.

### OUTDOOR DECORATIONS

Outdoor Christmas decorations are distinctively North American. Since the advent of electricity and the trend toward forest conservation, many have planted evergreens in their yards to be decorated with lights each year. During the past two decades, house and lawn decorations have become increasingly popular and many municipali-

ties offer prizes for the most original.

### CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

The sending of Christmas cards seems to be strictly an Anglo-Saxon custom. As far back as the reign of Queen Anne, British children wrote Christmas pieces for relatives, but the first holiday greetings, as we know them, were sent in 1845 by W. C. Dobson, one of Queen Victoria's favorite printers. By 1870 the custom was well established.

### SANTA CLAUS

Santa Claus is the American version of St. Nicholas, the bearded Saint of Europe who, on Christmas Eve, carried a basket of gifts for good children and a bunch of birch rods for the naughty ones. St. Nicholas was transformed into Santa Claus by the Dutch settlers in New Amsterdam, and he became the fat, jolly, rosy-cheeked old fellow he is today.

### GIFT GIVING

The custom of giving gifts at Christmas dates back to the bringing of the gifts by the Three Wise Men. In the time of Henry VII, it was a common practice for royalty to exact gifts from their subjects at Christmas. The custom grew so that today the exchange of gifts at Christmas time is universal.

### THE HANGING OF STOCKINGS

This custom originated with the Dutch. With them the presents for St. Nicholas Day had to be hidden and disguised as much as possible, so they were placed in their wooden shoes. When the Dutch came to New Amsterdam, this custom came with them—the wooden shoes being gradually replaced by stockings.

### THE YULE LOG

The bringing in of the Yule log originated in England dur-

ing medieval times. It was dragged into the great hall at the beginning of the Christmas feast and was the occasion of the rendering of the Christmas toast, which is, in part: "This Yule log burns. It destroys old hatreds and misunderstandings. Let your envies vanish, and let the spirit of good fellowship reign supreme for this season and through all the year."

### BAYBERRY CANDLES

Candles, placed in windows on Christmas Eve to light the Christ Child and to welcome wayfarers, have been popular for centuries, but the burning of Bayberry candles is a strictly North American custom which dates from colonial days. Though associated particularly with New England these aromatic candles glow in windows from coast to coast.

### HOLLY WREATHS

Wreaths have been characteristic as celebration since the beginning of time, but holly wreaths are used at Christmas because of that plant's association with the crucifixion. According to legend, the crown of thorns was planted from branches which bore white berries, but after the Crucifixion they became red.

### The MISTLETOE

Mistletoe was the sacred plant of the Druids, and was used by them when they performed their rites at the Winter Solstice. It was considered a sacred plant, so when the celebration of Christmas began to be observed in England, mistletoe became a part of the celebration. The custom of kissing under the mistletoe originated in the Scandinavian countries by Friga, Goddess of love and beauty, who being grateful for the return of her son, is said to bestow a kiss upon anyone who shall pass under the mistletoe.

he has ever seen. Title of the production was "Christmas Eve in a Toy Shop." Porter Falcon had a part in the playlet.

Mrs. Floyd Adams is enjoying having all of her children home for the holidays. Betty Jane, senior at Oregon State college, and Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Roscoe of Reno, Nev., came over the week end to join Mrs. Adams and Nancy until after the New Year.

# Where Our Christmas Comes From

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# 30 YEARS AGO

From Heppner Gazette Times Dec. 27, 1917

Miss Lela Campbell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. E. F. Campbell of this city, became the bride of P. A. Anderson Saturday, Dec. 22, at the home of the bride's sister, Mrs. Willis McCarty in Portland.

The marriage of Orain E. Wright and Willa Pearl LeTrace took place at the Freewater church Monday evening, Dec. 24, in the presence of a few friends and relatives.

Miss Grace Bellenbrock, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Bellenbrock of Rhea creek, and Edwin M. Geinger of Grant county were married at the home of the bride's parents on Wednesday, Dec. 19. They will make their home in Grant county where the groom has a ranch.

Married Thursday evening, Dec. 20, at the home of the pastor, Turner B. MacDonald, Clair

Ashbaugh and Miss Fay Kirk, both popular young people of Hardman.

Rastus Mallow Lindsey died at his home near Ione Dec. 24 at the age of 65 years and 25 days. He is survived by his wife and five children, Frank, Fred and Harry Lindsey, and Mrs. J. E. Crabtree of Ione and Mrs. D. C. Brock of Salem.

A beautiful Christmas cantata was rendered by the Sunday schools of the city at the Opera House Monday evening under the direction of Mrs. H. A. Noyes. One hundred fifty persons took part in the program.

The Heppner bakery was sold this week by Raglan & Coffey to W. C. Bowling, recently of Bonners Ferry, Idaho. Mr. Bowling took possession the first of the week.

Mr. and Mrs. Leslie Pruitt are

receiving congratulations on the birth of a daughter at St. Anthony's hospital Wednesday. Mrs. Pruitt was formerly Miss Viola Knighten of Hardman.

Two more of Heppner's young men enlisted in the service of Uncle Sam this week when Henry Aiken and Emil Groschen left for Portland to enlist in the flying division of the U. S. army.

### OLD DOCUMENT SHOWS OSC ONCE GRANTED MUCH LAND

Oregon State College—The original land grant made by the United States government to support Oregon's newly designated state college amounted to 90,000 acres and in 1873 was valued at \$225,000, or less than \$3 per acre.

This is revealed in an old document that has just come into possession of the college from Mrs. Charles A. Govier who found it in the papers of her father, G. W. Atherton, former president of Penn State college.

The document is a questionnaire sent out in 1873 by Atherton to all state colleges to "ascertain as far as possible the fruits up to the present time of the congressional land grants in aid of agricultural and scientific education."

It was filled out by B. L. Arnold, first president of the college, the name of which he gave as "Corvallis State Agricultural College." He reported the number of students at that time as 58 males and 42 females; graduates as 13 males and five females; tuition as \$6 to \$15 per term, with six instructors comprising the faculty. He also stated that income amounted to \$5000 per year for two years.

The present principal fund credited to the college from sale of the original grant lands now amounts to \$208,641.91, reports Paul Walgren, business manager, from which the college received income from interest of about \$10,000 annually some years ago, but with lower interest rates the amount is now down to around \$6000 per year.

Miss Ramona McDaniel of Monmouth is spending her vacation in Heppner with friends.



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