

Christmas Tree Once Forbidden

A Christmas tree will be put up in two out of every three American homes this year. Yet the trimmed tree, as we know and use it today, is only about 150 years old in this country.

The Pilgrims forbade Christmas celebrations on the grounds they were pagan. A Massachusetts law in 1639 subjected anyone to a fine who observed the day by feasting, refraining from work or in any other manner.

It was not until near the end of the American Revolution that the Christmas tree took hold. German immigrants, homesick for the tradition of their native land, put them up.

—Office Supplies at the Eagle—

Nativity Theme Popular For Card Illustrations

The Nativity theme is by far the most popular of all Christmas card illustrations. Many are reproduced from the old masters, but each year others are created especially for the Christmas card industry.

Winter scenes are next in popularity. Some of these scenes date back to the work of early masters but in recent years many new artists, such as Grandma Moses, have achieved fame in this field. For over a century, American artists have aided the industry by painting Christmas themes or by selling reproduction rights to their works.

**JOB PRINTING
AT PRICES HARD TO BEAT
THE VERNONIA EAGLE**

Where Did Santa Claus Come From? Legends Are Traced Through Ages

Did you ever wonder where Santa Claus came from? Not just where he is now with his busy helpers and reindeer but where he was born, something of his life and how he came to be such a friend to children everywhere.

Well, about 1600 years ago, a young boy named Nicholas lived in the country of Lycia, in Asia Minor, which is now part of Southwestern Turkey. His parents were wealthy and religious and his childhood devoted largely to studies instead of play, for Nicholas was a bright boy. Even as a child he was known for his generosity and the promptness with which he finished any task given him.

When he reached young manhood, Nicholas, like many others, decided to visit the Holy Land. He had inherited the piety of his parents and wanted to see for himself the country where Jesus lived, from the manger at Bethlehem to the hillock at Calvary.

Nicholas returned from his journey determined he could best serve the people he loved in a religious order. Later he became the Bishop of Myra. His fame grew and spread to other cities as one who gave his time, himself and his fortune to the needy and disheartened.

There is a famous story of how Nicholas found a poor nobleman who could not afford dowries for his three beautiful daughters. It was the custom at that time for the bride to give a gift, called a dowry, to her husband-to-be. Without this the girls could not be married. So secretly on three different nights, Nicholas tossed a bag of gold through the window of their home. The daughters were enabled by the gracious deed to marry.

In the wake of this legend, it is no wonder that to succeeding generations Nicholas became the patron saint of maidens. But others,

too, claimed him as their benefactor — Children, sailors, merchants, travelers, and, strangely enough, even thieves, for every kind of person came to know his kindness and love and wanted his protection.

Down through the centuries the story of St. Nicholas was carried to other countries and, of course, he became known by names quite different from the one you call him—Santa Claus.

For instance, he is Jul Tomte in Sweden, Bonhomme Noel in France and Lau Khoong in China today, as the Germans call him Kris Kringle which actually means Christ Child.

Santa Claus first came to America through our early Dutch colonists who settled in New Amsterdam, bringing with them the legend of Saint Niklaas, as he was known in Holland. In America, we, too, like to use words our own way.

No doubt the Dutch "Saint Niklaas" was changed to the easier said "Santa Claus" by the little girls and boys of long ago who waited so eagerly for his yearly visit.

Many countries have contributed to the history of Santa Claus, to what he should wear, how he should travel, even his personal appearance.

His twinkling eye, cherry nose and plump body are purely American. It was a scholarly New Yorker, Dr. Clement Moore, who saw the "jolly old elf" most clearly and recorded for the world, the classic picture of him in the poem which begins, "Twas the night before Christmas."

Here Santa Claus comes to life, merry, affectionate, a friend of little children, one who finds a great joy in giving. Through him the spirit of mankind is lifted, soaring up the snow-blown path of the sleigh and eight tiny reindeer to a happy world where anything is possible.

YESTERDAYS

FIVE YEARS AGO
From The Eagle, Dec. 24, 1953

Ben Fowler, commander of the VFW post, issued rules Tuesday for the steelhead derby to run from December 29 through March 15.

The high school honor roll released this week listed 48 students: 15 juniors, 12 seniors, 12 freshmen and 9 sophomores. Seniors listed were: William Braun, Margaret Brissett, June Cunningham, Marylyn Good, Marlene Gray, Patricia Hickman, Joyce Jones, Dorothy Liles, Kenneth Nanson, Pete Norris, Kathleen Sauer and Don Shafer.

Pictured in this issue were the Christmas decorations at the Grant Thayer home and the Christmas scenes painted on Mrs. Lulah Fullerton's windows.

TEN YEARS AGO
From The Eagle, Dec. 23, 1948

The churches of Vernonia join tonight in presenting a cantata "The Light of Christmas," directed by G. Wm. Anderson, Christian church pastor. There are about 40 persons in the choir.

Mrs. Ben Brickel, Vernonia's community chest drive chairman reported \$1027 collected, half of which would be used locally. (Note: at this time other separ-

ate drives covered things now included in U.F.)

Guy Thomas, manager of West Oregon Electric urged everyone to curtail use of power from 5:30 to 6:00 p.m. because of power shortage in the Pacific Northwest.

A fire starting from an overheated furnace hot air duct about 7:30 Thursday evening caused about \$200 damage at the E.U.B. church.

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO
From The Eagle, Dec. 22, 1943

First prize winner in the decoration contest sponsored by the Business Women's club was the display made by Mrs. Oscar Vike at the Terminal cafe. Sam's Food store was second.

Mr. and Mrs. F. R. Olin received a letter from their daughter Frances, who with her husband, Rev. Vincent Gowen and children, Geoffrey and Ann, was interned at Camp Holmes in the Philippine Islands.

Christmas seal returns were still coming in according to Paul Gordon, local chairman. \$350 had been received.

An illuminated picture is on display in the Christian church pagoda depicting Bethlehem. It is illuminated with 1000 watts of light.

Sell it with an Eagle Classified.

To our Vernonia Friends
May peace and good will
abide in your hearts this
Christmas Season.

REV. AND MRS. F. M.
KNOLL AND MARION



1958

We can't call on you all so
we take this means of send-
ing our many friends a
Christmas greeting.

Miller's Department Store

A day of peace,
A day of gladness...
This is our Christmas
Wish for you



**FUITEN AND DAVIS
CHAPEL IN THE HILLS**

MR. AND MRS. CALVIN C. DAVIS
MR. AND MRS. JAMES B. FUITEN
MR. AND MRS. LLOYD THOMAS



PEACE ON EARTH

... and good-will toward all men!
May the peace and great joys of
Christmas be yours now and
always.

1958

Mill Market and Lockers

Ida, Lois, Gretchen, Bill and Wes



Stiffs Grocery

Mr. and Mrs. L. E. Stiff and Elvin

Merry Christmas



MAY ALL THE JOY OF THE
SEASON BE WITH YOU.

Bethlehem Service Station

Lloyd Callister