

The Story of a Famous Christmas Poem



The Night Before Christmas

WAS the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;
The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced through their heads;
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,
Just settled our brains for a long winter's nap—
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter,
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the mash,
The moon, on the breast of the new-fallen snow,
Gave a luster of midday to objects below;
When what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny reindeer,
With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled and shouted and called them by name:
"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer! now, Prancer and Vixen!
On, Comet! on, Cupid, on, Dunder and Blixen!"
To the top of the porch, to the top of the wall,
Now dash away, dash away, dash away all!
As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky,
So, up to the house-top the coursers they flew,
With a sleigh full of toys—and St. Nicholas, too.
And then in a twinkling I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.
As I drew in my head and was turning around,
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.
He was dressed all in fur from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all furnished with ashes and soot;
A bundle of toys he had slung on his back,
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.
His eyes how they twinkled! his dimples how merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry;
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow.
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And the smoke it exhaled he held like a wreath.
He had a broad face, and a little round belly,
That shook, when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.
He was chubby and plump—a right jolly old elf—
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself.
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.
He spoke not a word, but went straight to my work,
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,
And laying his finger aside of his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle;
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight:
"Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good-night!"
—Clement C. Moore.

By ELMO SCOTT WATSON

WHEN recent press dispatches carried the news that a New York woman, Mrs. Tillie Hart, who for four months had withstood the siege of a wrecking crew seeking to tear down her home to make way for a \$25,000,000 apartment house, had at last capitulated and allowed the house to be demolished, there was one good reason why the story was more than merely a local New York news item. For the disputed building has rightfully been called "the birthplace of Santa Claus" because in it more than a hundred years ago Dr. Clement C. Moore wrote a famous Christmas poem in which for the first time the American Santa Claus was described, his mode of traveling was pictured and the lavishness of his giving was made known. That poem was "The Night Before Christmas," which every American has recited or heard recited at some time or another. And for that reason the news that "the birthplace of Santa Claus" was to be wiped out of existence had nationwide interest.

Quite aside from his fame as the author of "The Night Before Christmas," Doctor Moore was a notable man. His father, Bishop Benjamin Moore, the second Protestant Episcopal bishop of New York and the third president of Columbia university, assisted at the inauguration of Washington and administered the last rites to the dying Alexander Hamilton after the fatal duel with Aaron Burr. Clement C. Moore was graduated from Columbia university in 1798 and was a professor of Hebrew and Greek in the General Theological seminary from 1821 to 1850. He was a prolific writer, one of his literary productions bearing the imposing title of "Observations Upon Certain Passages in Mr. Jefferson's Notes on the State of Virginia Which Appear to Have a Tendency to Subvert Religion and Establish a False Philosophy." However, his most important work, the one at least upon which he believed his fame as a scholar would be secure, was "A Compendious Lexicon of the Hebrew Language." He little realized that future generations of Americans would remember him better as the author of what he was accustomed to call "a silly poem," the authorship of which he refused to acknowledge for a long time.

Yet such was the case, for a short time before Christmas in 1822, Doctor Moore wrote for his children a Christmas poem and they were delighted with the rollicking tale, as other children, not only in this country but in many other lands, have been ever since. A daughter of Rev. Dr. David Butler, rector of St. Paul's church at Troy, N. Y., who was a niece of Doctor Moore, was a Christmas guest in the Moore home and made a copy of the poem in her album. The next year she sent a copy of it to the Troy Sentinel and it appeared in that paper, prefaced by a note from the editor saying he did not know who had sent it. By the next year it had appeared in many other newspapers and magazines and within a few years it had found its way into the school books. By this time inquiries were beginning to be made as to its authorship and eventually Doctor Moore, none too well pleased that his "silly poem" was so well known, whereas his scholarly "Compendious Lexicon" attracted little attention, except from other scholars, admitted its authorship and gave the autographed original manuscript of the poem to the New York Historical society.

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Christmas Always One

CHRISTMAS in many places comes with a flurry of snow and ice. Part of its joy lies in the sound of carols upon the frosty air; the peal of glad bells across the snow; the warm and welcome glow of bright fires upon the hearth.

Christmas in other places comes with soft, caressing winds; it is greeted by blooming flower and tree; by a warm, fragrant atmosphere and smiling blue skies and bright sunshine. But wherever and under what conditions Christmas comes it is a well come day; a time of gladness and good cheer; of true and sincere friendliness and good will. Under its influence hearts thrill with happiness and content. To the young it brings new joy, to the old happy memories. Climate or country has nothing to do with it; it is the spirit and joy of the time that makes a merry Christmas.

So, whether one lives in the northland or the southland, Christmas is a



THE PASSING OF A LANDMARK—WISCONSIN NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS WAS WRITTEN

particularly in the names of the reindeer. "Vixen" of the original has become "Vixen" and "Dunder" has been changed to "Dunder." The title which Doctor Moore gave to his verses was "A Visit From St. Nicholas," but the modern version, taken from the first line, is "The Night Before Christmas." Its popularity, however, has been unchanged throughout the 107 years. It has been translated into many foreign tongues and it has delighted the children of many nations.

Doctor Moore died in 1863 at his summer home in Newport, R. I. His body was taken to New York, which was then in the throes of the draft riots, and was placed temporarily in a vault at St. Luke's church in Hudson street. Later it was removed to the churchyard of the Chapel of the Intercession (Trinity parish) and there it rests today in a plot of ground which holds also the bodies of his wife and their three children. In fact, this plot has been more of a Christmas shrine than has the house near Chelsea Square, where the poem was written and a very pretty Christmas ceremony in memory of Doctor Moore takes place there every year.

Rev. Dr. Milo H. Gates, vicar of the chapel at Broadway and One Hundred and Fifty-fifth street, has long been an admirer of the poem and its scholarly author. In 1911 he held the first service in Doctor Moore's memory. About 200 children gathered with him at the grave at the foot of the hill overshadowed by the high wall which is topped by Riverside drive. Since then the number has grown to more than 2,000. The ceremony begins at four o'clock on Christmas eve with the feast of lights in the church. Then the children gather in the cloister while a fanfare of trumpets from the bell tower heralds the procession to the cemetery. Led by the trumpeters they move along One Hundred and Fifty-fifth street, carrying banners, lighted candles, torches and lanterns, past the huge Christmas tree in the corner of the churchyard.

All Broadway traffic is halted as they cross, the swell of their music rising above the noise of the street and falling away again as they pass. From the steps of the cemetery and the road that winds around from side to side down the hill, the voices may still be heard on the busy street singing "Little Town of Bethlehem," "Silent Night, Holy Night," "We Three Kings of Orient Are," "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen," and many other favorite Christmas hymns and carols.

Except for the lights in the children's hands, it is quite dark by the time they reach the stone marked "Clement Clarke Moore, born in New York July 15, 1779; died in Newport, R. I., July 10, 1863." A final carol is sung as a wreath is laid against the stone and before disbanding, the procession moves on to a grave nearby to honor the memory of Alfred Tennyson, Dickens, author of another Christmas classic, "A Christmas Carol."

Another ceremony honoring Doctor Moore is held annually at St. Peter's Episcopal church on Twentieth street. A tablet is erected to his memory there because he was the first warden of that church and also gave the land upon which it stands, as well as the land upon which was built the General Theological seminary with which it has a close connection.

happy, merry day only in that measure that we have allowed its beautiful spirit to enter our hearts.—Katherine Edelman.

(© 1929 Western Newspaper Union.)

Have Christmas All Year

Christmas is a time of forgetting small enemies; if we determine to forget them all the year, we shall be having Christmas throughout the year.

STOCK SHOW'S STEER SELLS FOR \$7,837.50

"Lucky Strike," Winner, Is Sold at Auction.

Chicago.—The world's highest beef price was paid at auction by J. C. Penney, chain store operator, for the grand champion steer of the International Live Stock show. Elliott Brown, the twenty-year-old, Rosehill, Iowa, farm youth, who raised "Lucky Strike," the prize steer, receives \$7,837.50 for the 950-pound animal.

At last year's show, Mr. Penney set a new record for that time when he was awarded "Dick," 1928 grand champion, for \$7 a pound. Since that time the mark was advanced to \$8.02 for the title steer at the American Royal Live Stock show at Kansas City.

The earnings that Elliott gets from his Aberdeen-Angus amount to \$9,142.50. Weighing 960 pounds on the hoof, the calf brought \$7,837.50 at the sale. Added to that was \$500 from a director of the International show, Henry W. Marshall of Lafayette, Ind.; a like amount from the American Aberdeen-Angus Breeders' association, and \$375 in miscellaneous awards. Charged against this was about \$65 for feed, Elliott's father having given him the calf to raise.

The bidding for the prize animal started at 25 cents a pound and ran up under spirited rivalry.

The price of \$35 a hundred pounds was paid for the champion carload of cattle by Abernethy and Bastian, Allentown, Pa., packers, who also were awarded the champion lot in 1928, but the lot last year brought \$44 a hundredweight. The lot was of 15 Aberdeen-Angus pure bred, averaging 1,000 pounds each, for which Ed. F. Hall, of Mechanicsburg, Ill., the exhibitor, received \$5,250.

The grand champion car of lambs, shown by Robert McEwen and Son, of Ontario, Canada, was sold to Armour and company, at 3 1/2 cents a pound. The 51 lambs averaged 82 pounds each. A dramatic moment of the horse show came when the King Albert cup, offered by the Societe du Cheval de Trait Belge of Brussels, was presented in the name of the king of Belgium to "Balzac de Bognerend," shown by the Holbert Horse Importing Company of Greeley, Iowa, thereby giving the Hawkeye state another honor to the long list of awards accumulated at the show.

The Belgian ware grand and senior championships went to Earle Brown of Minneapolis, Minn., whose "Genesee d'Erget" outclassed a field of more than 15 competitors.

First prize winners in the Belgian mare classes aside from the champion were entries of Charles A. Wentz and Sons of Kirby, Ohio, and Michigan State college.

Canada scored high honors in the judging of Clydesdale horses, the grand champion stallion, "Sonny Boy," having been shown by James A. Johnstone of Yellow Grass, Saskatchewan. The animal also placed as junior champion stallion, "Boreland's Best," owned by E. A. Jones and Sons of Bangor, Wis., was selected as senior champion stallion, the reserve going to "Baron Adam," belonging to A. G. Soderberg, of Osceola, Ill.

"Lady Trojan Mahomet," also nominated by James A. Johnstone, was crowned the champion Clydesdale mare of the exposition.

American exhibitors outclassed those of England in the competition for milking shorthorn cattle. Hudson and Sons, of Mason, Ohio, won the grand and senior championship honors with "Princess." Olson Brothers also won the grand and senior championships for bulls in the milking shorthorn judging with "Hillcreek Milkman."

The grand champion cow in the breeding Red Polled cattle was "Lindwood Golden Lilia," shown by Tracy and Warye, of Nashua, Iowa.

It was reported from the auction sales of breeding cattle that prices were most satisfactory with the top registering \$1,750 for a shorthorn bull.

Ohio triumphed in the judging of breeding Duroc-Jersey swine, the grand championship for boars going to Charles P. Raup, of Springfield.

In the breeding Yorkshire swine, the grand champion boar was presented by B. F. Davidson, of Menlo, Iowa, Cudahy and Reed, of Palmyra, Wis., getting the reserve. The latter was awarded the grand championship on sows.

J. C. Penney was the popular winner in the classes for breeding Hampshire sheep. The nominations of the chain store man made a clean sweep in the judging of champion rams, annexing the blues for the titular and reserve animals. The champion and reserve ewe in that class was shown by the Mount Haggin Land and Live Stock company, of Anaconda, Mont.

Chase brothers, of Willow Lakes, S. D., took the championship and reserve in the classes of breeding Cheviot rams. The ewe championship and reserve went to Archie E. Minish, Hudson, Iowa.

Fines Railroad \$25,000

Columbus, Ohio.—Federal Judge Hough fined the Detroit, Toledo & Ironton railroad \$1,000 on each of 25 counts charging acceptance of discriminatory concessions from Norfolk & Western interests on the shipment of coal.

Railroad Raises Wages

Houston, Texas.—A 5 per cent increase in pay for more than 500 clerks at Galveston has been awarded by the Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe railway.

OBJECTS TO MEDDLING



Maxim Litvinoff.

London.—In a report here from Moscow it is stated that Maxim Litvinoff, acting commissioner for foreign affairs, declared that the Kellogg pact was not infringed upon, with reference to Russia's conflict with China, and that attempts by foreign powers "to invoke the pact of Paris cannot frighten us." "If foreign powers interfere," he said, "the Soviet is depending upon the sympathy of the workers and peasants and the red army in forcing acceptance of conditions for peace and settlement of the conflict which the Soviet has presented to China."

NATIONS ARE TOLD YOUNG PLAN IS O. K.

German Delegate Says Success of Project Is Endangered.

Berlin.—Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, chief German delegate to the conference which framed the Young plan, protested what he said were attempts by creditor states and the government itself to tamper with that plan. He said these efforts were endangering the success of the project.

In a memorandum to the government Doctor Schacht emphasized that German delegates signed the Young plan and recommended its adoption on the assumption that the scheme would be respected by other powers represented at the conference. He said signatures were attached with the understanding that German financial and economic policies would be revised in such a manner as to enable Germany to bear the burdens imposed by the Young plan.

He said these suppositions were not being respected. Although German delegates specifically did not admit that the total annuities named in the Young plan were bearable by Germany, creditor states were already demanding additional burdens or renunciation. In this Doctor Schacht referred to demands that Germany should renounce her claim to a credit of 400,000,000 marks paid under the Dawes plan up to September 1, whereas payments under the Young plan are to begin as of last April 21.

Furthermore, Doctor Schacht said, Germany was now being asked to increase its annuities in the first twenty years.

He said Britain was asking Germany to renounce claims for liquidated German property totaling 300,000,000 marks, while at the same time Germany was asked to make property concessions to Poland. On top of these, the subcommittee which recently met in Paris has asked the country to forgo a number of financial rights.

All these demands, taken together, Doctor Schacht said, would run into billions of dollars. He blames the government for having done nothing in the way of reforming Germany's budget or reorganizing her finances.

Coast-to-Coast Highway Is Proposed to Hoover

New York.—A national highway, 200 feet wide from Maine to the state of Washington, was proposed to President Hoover as a federal project which would be a direct aid to national prosperity. It is estimated that the highway would cost \$900,000,000.

Find Lost Air Mail Pilot

Cleveland, Ohio.—The mystery of the fate of Pilot Thomas P. Nelson, who disappeared in the darkness and snowstorm while flying the air mail from Bellefonte, Pa., to Cleveland, was solved when his body and his wrecked plane were found in a ravine near Chagrin Falls, Ohio.

New Cabinet Named in Haiti

Port-au-Prince, Haiti.—President Louis Borno has appointed a new cabinet.

Italy Orders Great Liner

Trieste, Italy.—A 43,000 ton ocean liner with accommodations for 3,000 passengers and able to make the run between Naples and New York in seven days has been ordered built for the Lloyd Sabaudia line.

Blast Kills 5 in Post Office

Pittsburgh, Pa.—An explosion of gas wrecked the post office at Munhall, a suburb, recently, killing five persons and injuring twenty-five others, one so seriously he may die.

DAIRY THE DAIRY

CLOVER GRAZING IS PROFITABLE

Two Fields Are Needed for Continuous Feeding.

(Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.)

On soils that contain lime the most productive grazing crop known today is sweet clover, according to the experts in forage crops in the United States Department of Agriculture. They point out that a good stand of second-season sweet clover can carry two head of cows per acre from early spring until mid-summer and cases are known where four head did not keep it down. Get the stock in early, they advise, when the clover is 6 inches high and put cattle enough on to keep it from blossoming; with only one cow to an acre the clover gets old too fast.

For continuous grazing, they point out, two fields of sweet clover are necessary, one that has just passed its first winter and one starting its first season's growth. Turn cattle on the older field in the spring and keep them there until July 15-30. By this time the sweet clover will bloom and get too woody to be palatable and the clover on the new field should be 3 to 8 inches high. The new clover will carry only about half the stock the old field carried, and allowance must be made for that by having double the acreage or by having other pasture. An excess acreage in the fall is not a bad thing, as any field not needed for grazing the next season can be turned under the next spring for corn with great benefit to the corn.

After grazing stops on the older field the clover will make considerable growth and this can be plowed under in the fall with great benefit to any succeeding crop.

There is less danger from bloat with sweet clover than with other clovers, but cases have been known, and the usual precautions should be taken.

Mature Dairy Animals Are Needlessly Killed

A larger number of mature animals at the government dairy experimental farm, Beltsville, Md., have died from the effects of swallowing nails, wire, or similar material than from any other one cause, according to the bureau of dairy industry, United States Department of Agriculture. Autopsies made at this station showed that out of a total of 26 deaths over a period of years 12 were due to swallowing foreign objects, the most common of which was a sharp-pointed piece of wire two or three inches long. Such material collects in that part of the stomach known as the "honey comb" or reticulum. Some of the sharp-pointed objects may pass through the stomach wall and pierce the heart or other vital organ, with fatal results. Great care should, therefore, be exercised in handling and disposing of such materials as baling wire, nails, and rusted-out fencing.

Electric Current Used in Milking Any Herd

Five cents in the form of electricity will do a great many things. It has been figured out that a nickel's worth of electric current generated by a farm light plant will milk 10 cows, separate 1,400 pounds of milk, churn 20 pounds of butter, sharpen an axe or a scythe on the grindstone six times, pump a two-days' supply of water, run an electric sewing machine for five hours or do two large family washings.

According to the latest available information, nearly a million farms in the United States are electrified. While many of these farms have electric "high line" service, a large number are supplied by individual farm plants, particularly in communities where the "high lines" have not yet gone.

Maintain Fresh Water Supply for Dairy Cow

Plenty of pure, fresh water should be accessible to the dairy herd at all times. An average sized cow consumes from 50 to 100 pounds of water a day when dry. She will need four times this amount, or 200 to 400 pounds of water a day when in full flow of milk. Water supplies 87 per cent of the total content of milk and 56 per cent of the total body weight. Stagnant pools in the pasture should be filled or drained—dangerous intestinal parasites flourish around pond holes. Concrete water troughs, provided with drain pipes and floating valves, are practical.

Salt for Cows

The craving of dairy cattle for common salt is based upon a real need of the body. The dairy cow uses salt in proportion to the feed consumed; in other words, the high producer will need more than the low producer. The most common plan of supplying salt is to keep it before the animals at all times, either in the form of rock salt or ordinary stock salt. Other dairymen prefer to mix it with the grain usually at the rate of one pound per 100 pounds of grain mixture.

POULTRY

TURKEY RAISING SHOULD DEVELOP

Survey Reveals Industry One of Most Profitable.

That "turkey production in the West should become one of the major farm enterprises if economic conditions remain as good as they have been during the past three years" is the belief of F. B. Headley, chief of the department of farm development of the University of Nevada agricultural experiment station.

Basis for his conclusion, Headley says, is a cost of production study carried on by his department during the last three years on five farms in Churchill county. Other profitable enterprises on the farms surveyed, according to the experiment station man, were alfalfa production, dairying and the raising of chickens, but turkeys brought in greater return for capital and labor expended.

Cost of producing the average turkey, which weighed 13 pounds dressed, on the basis of more than 5,000 birds covered by the study, was \$3.52, or approximately 27 cents a pound.

"The bulk of the cost in producing turkeys is for feed," Headley says. "On most farms pasture constitutes an essential part of the ration and it is probable that the low cost of production is due in large part to the excellent alfalfa and grain stubble pasture that has been available."

Other conclusions concerning turkey production drawn by Headley from the survey are that the interest on investment is low, that "large flocks require less time per bird than the smaller flocks, and that over 75 per cent of all costs is for labor and feed."

Popularity of Frozen Eggs Fast Increasing

While at one time practically all eggs kept in Pennsylvania cold storage warehouses were "in shell," several million pounds of eggs "out of shell" have been reported in storage each year during the past few years, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. On June 30, 1928, the cold storage report for the state showed 4,657,000 pounds of eggs out of shell in storage, just ten times more than were in storage on the corresponding date in 1914.

The increasing popularity of the frozen eggs is explained by the bureau of markets as follows: "In the spring when eggs are plentiful, surplus eggs are purchased by breaking establishments which break and place the eggs in containers to be frozen as whole eggs, egg yolks, or egg whites for the use of the baking industry. After being frozen solid, the eggs are kept at a temperature ranging from zero to five degrees below. These are then made available to bakers at any time during the year. Many bakers report that these eggs give the most satisfactory results when kept in a frozen condition for about three months."

Well-Ventilated House Needful During Winter

A warm poultry house that will help to keep egg production high during the winter months must be well ventilated, says Prof. E. R. Gross, agricultural engineer at the New Jersey experimental station, New Brunswick.

To maintain a warm, well-ventilated henhouse three things are needed, advises Professor Gross: Tight walls, doors, and windows; ventilating flues, which may be constructed of wood at a low cost, and limited overhead space. To make the building tight, close all the cracks, cover the outside walls with roll roofing, or seal the inside walls. Reduce the air space by ceiling overhead or by constructing a straw loft.

Ventilation and warmth go together. If the house is tightly built and has all doors and windows closed, the birds will give off heat enough to raise the inside temperature considerably above that on the outside. But when the house is tightly closed, moisture will begin to accumulate and the air become stale. Ventilation is needed, therefore, to carry away the moisture and to bring in fresh air.

Disappointment Sure

Compounding the ration of the laying hen, particular attention should be paid to the inclusion of the necessary vitamins. Yellow corn and green feeds provide much of vitamin A. Vitamin B is carried in wheat, corn, green feeds, alfalfa meal, alfalfa leaf flour and others. Vitamin D, or its equivalent, is supplied by making use of direct sunshine or by resorting to cod liver oil, the latter being an outstanding source of this most essential substance.

Keep Ground Clean

Clean and fresh ground may be made available by moving the house or houses to new ground each year, or by having a regular rotation of sown crops.

Sanitary ground is particularly necessary in the handling of all chicks and growing stock.

All poultry runs should be disced and planted with oats, rye, wheat or similar crops. Discing or plowing once a year is not sufficient for best results.