

A Remembrance

Going home for Christmas

By KATE MACKIE ALLEN, '29
Chowanian Society Member

Anticipation of an event is often more exciting than the actual event, and Christmas vacation is no exception. At least it was for me in the late 1920's when I was a student at Chowan -- then a four-year college for women.

Unlike today when one jumps into one's car and dashes up highway 158 to I-85 to I-40 to 421 North and in less than four hours arrives in Yadkinville, in those days one took a more circuitous route, a route that was, for me, a source of high but innocent adventure, especially when going home for Christmas.

This is how it went.

My parents sent me money for pullman fare on the train. There was method in their generosity for the pullman car went over-night straight to Winston-Salem, and they were mindful of my safety. But these were hard times and I devised a better way to spend the money.

First, I took the bus to Weldon where I bought a coach ticket on the Seaboard, checked my baggage and went out on the town. With money saved by going coach I did my Christmas

shopping on downtown Washington Avenue.

Now, there was more than thrift involved in my travel plans; for, you see, while the pullman car sat on the tracks in Greensboro waiting to be switched to the Southern four hours later, we coach passengers had to spend the four after-midnight hours in the train station.

It was here that the joy of Christmas holidays ignited like the flare of an open fire on a cold winter night. The catalyst for this excitement was the presence of a bunch of college boys -- State, Carolina, Wake Forest -- all in a holiday mood, all vying for attention, making this small-town girl feel like the leader of the ball. We drank coffee and Coke, we sang and wrapped my gifts and, finally, being neither tired nor sleepy, we boarded the Southern coach headed west.

But it was the train conductor who had the genuine Christmas spirit. After calling out "Kernersville" he said, "Little girl bring your packages, I'll take your baggage to the pullman car."

"It's like you said -- your parents will be waiting for you at the pullman steps."



First Homecoming Parade in years brought out the clowns, floats and fire trucks.



The class of 1941 celebrated their 50th reunion in the parlor of McDowell Columns with an anniversary cake and lots of memories. Lucille Craft, John L. Mathews, Nancy Rosser Kutulas, Juanita W. Speight, J.G. Long Jr., and Virginia and L.L. Darden met together to recall the good times that were had in 1940-41. Campus sweethearts, Virginia and L.L. Darden were campus Queen and King while at Chowan.



The class of '66 enjoyed a steak dinner in celebration of their 25th Silver Anniversary. Raymond Warren did a great impression of "Uncle Buck" Marvel, a popular professor on campus in '66. Class President Gary Tolley and his wife Mary Jane, of Goochland, Va., organized the reunion and Gary presided at the meeting. Saying it was a "collect call to Coach Garrison (football coach) that brought him to Chowan," he urged his classmates not to forget each other and return from future reunions at Chowan.

