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## THE ANGELS AND SHEPHERDS.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.

And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,

"Glory to God in the highest,  
And on earth peace, good will to-ward men."

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And they all that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.—Luke, 2: 8-20.

### SANTA CLAUS LIVES.

Nearly twenty years ago, a little girl, Virginia O'Hanlon, eight years old, evidenced some doubt of the existence of the Santa Claus, who makes all children so happy on Christmas Day.

Virginia was so skeptical that she wrote the New York Sun to find out if there was any truth in the Santa Claus story. The Sun answered her. The Sun then was in charge of Mr. Charles A. Dana, and Mr. Frank P. Church was the author of the Sun's reply which was printed on September 21, 1897. Following is the editorial:

"We take pleasure in answering, at once and thus prominently, the communication below, expressing at the same time our great gratification that its faithful author is numbered among the friends of the Sun:

"Dear Editor: I am eight years old. Some of my little friends say there is no Santa Claus. Papa says, 'If you see it in The Sun, it's so.' Please tell me the truth; is there a Santa Claus?"  
"VIRGINIA O'HANLON.

"Virginia, your little friends are wrong. They have been affected by the skepticism of a skeptical age. They do not believe except they see. They think that nothing can be which is not comprehensible by their little minds. All minds, Virginia, whether they be men's or children's, are little. In this great universe of our man is a mere insect, an ant, in his intellect, as compared with the boundless world about him, as measured by the intelligence capable of grasping the whole of truth and knowledge.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus. He exists as certainly as love and generosity and devotion exist, and you know that they abound and give to your life its highest beauty and joy. Alas! how dreary would be the world if there were no Santa Claus. There would be no childrenlike faith then, no poetry, no romance to make tolerable this existence. We should have no enjoyment, except in sense and sight. The eternal light with which childhood filled the world would be extinguished.

Not believe in Santa Claus! You might as well not believe in fairies! You might get your papa to hire men to watch in all the chimneys on Christmas Eve to catch Santa Claus, but even if they did not see Santa Claus coming down, what would that prove? Nobody sees Santa Claus, but that is no sign that there is no Santa Claus. The most real things in the world are those that neither children nor men can see. Did you ever see fairies dancing on the lawn? Of course not, but that's no proof that they are not there. Nobody can conceive or imagine all the wonders there are unseen and unseeable in the world.

You might tear apart the baby's rattle and see what makes the noise inside, but there is a veil covering the unseen world which not the strongest man, nor even the united strength of faith, fancy, poetry, love, romance, can push aside that curtain and view and picture the supernal beauty and glory beyond. Is it all real? Ah, Virginia, in all this world there is nothing else real and abiding.

No Santa Claus! Thank God he lives, and he lives forever. A thousand years from now, Virginia, nay, ten times ten thousand years from now, he will continue to make glad the heart of childhood.

## LETTER FROM MR. A. VERMONT.

Former Smithfield School Man Writes of the Fine Coasting in the Mountain City. Tells of Asheville's Wood Yard and the Price of Wood.

Dear Mr. Editor:

I am looking out from my study window on the glory of the snow-covered mountains, they are inexpressibly beautiful. The sun is just setting and the skies truly "declare the glory of God." A man should have an indifferent-soul not to be moved by the splendor of it all. One must see to appreciate the greatness of this country.

Shall I tell you that the boys and girls enjoy the snow and the ice? The other night they invited us to a sledding, or coasting party. It was an unusual experience and well worth the undertaking. There is a street named Flint, which is to all purposes a hill-hide some three or four blocks long, asphalt-paved and slick as glass. The game of sledding or coasting is simple. You take your sled, go to the top of the street, lie down on your stomach on your coaster, and shoot the chute. There were some forty of us, school-folks, who went, and of all the fun that is coming to mortals, this was the greatest. It was after supper, the street had been roped off for the benefit of the coasters, and soon the exhilarating rides began. I first looked at the scene. It seemed that big gigantic bugs were shooting down the street, it was certainly weird. Several of the students invited me to a "chute," and I thoroughly enjoyed the healthful game.

And we were not the only ones, for it seemed that a good crowd of Asheville people had come to enjoy the fun. I am beginning to understand now why this country is considered a health resort in winter. This and other out-of-door amusements are unquestionably attracting folks from everywhere.

All is not fun, however, in this fine city. At present we are, like you all in Johnston County, hard at work on the things that will help us win the war. The other day the Seniors of our High School pledged themselves not to give or receive Christmas presents except in their family circle. Their savings go to the Red Cross. And it is interesting to see the boys and girls come to school all eager to help in this great cause. All the teachers have given their silent consent to knitting on class, and whilst I explain the lessons, the

girls are knitting sweaters, helmets, etc. In the study-halls the same custom obtains. Every spare moment is spent to help along our soldier boys.

And right here, Mr. Editor, may I congratulate the friends of Johnston County for the magnificent work they are doing along the same lines. I am especially proud of the last issue of The Herald. It rang absolutely clear and true on all the great issues of the war. Johnston is awakening to the importance of the task before us, and it will be a sweet remembrance in years to come to know that your paper and the county have done their best in this time and day. You are deserving the praise, Mr. Editor, of every American patriot, and with you all, they should be praised who give of their time and their energy to the great cause.

My letter may be long, still there is one more thing that I wish to tell about. Asheville has a wood-yard and this seems to be a blessing to the people. We can buy no pine, but we get very good oak and other hard wood for \$5.50 a cord. This wood is delivered to us for that price in stove length. I discussed this the other day with a farmer who usually brings wood to town; he said he liked it. He can take his wagon to the City-wood-yard and get his pay at once. He is sure of a market for his wood, he does not have to drive about town looking for a customer, and we ourselves do not depend on the farmers. This municipal wood-yard is such a success that I believe it will stay after the war.

I must close. Several of the boys have asked me to go with them to the lake at Grove Park Inn. They are all provided with skates and are in for a fine time. There is more in teaching than the mere imparting of information from books, and therefore I am going with the boys. Can you think of a finer evening than this out-of-doors afternoon on one of the prettiest spots in America?

With very best wishes for Christmas to you and your readers, a Christmas hallowed with the great idea of Service to our Country, I am very truly yours,

A. VERMONT.  
Asheville, N. C., Dec. 17, 1917.

### War News in Brief.

The Austro-Germans have renewed in great strength their effort to pierce the Italian line and debouch upon the plains of Venetia in the region of Bassano. In fierce fighting around Montebelluna in which the enemy again

suffered severe losses, and several times was repulsed, reinforcements in large numbers were brought up and the Italians were compelled to give ground. The fighting lasted throughout Tuesday and, according to the German war office, more than 2,000 Italians were made prisoner.

Likewise, along the southern reaches of the Piave river, the invaders and the Italians are engaged in heavy fighting. A crossing of the Old Piave on pontoon bridge was successfully carried out by one enemy detachment, but later the Italians drove back the Teutons to the water's edge.

The fighting on the other fronts still remains below normal, although the artillery duels on various sectors continue intense. The artillery activity between the French and Germans in Champagne and in the mountainous regions near the Swiss border is increasing in volume, probably forecasting infantry attacks at an early date.

Again the losses to British shipping through torpedoes or submarines shows a decrease. According to the weekly statement of the British admiralty seventeen merchantmen were sent to the bottom last week as compared with twenty-one the previous week. French shipping suffered only the loss of one vessel during the week and this a small one of less than 1,600 tons.

An enemy submarine, however, has torpedoed and sunk in the Mediterranean Sea the old French cruiser Chateaufort, which was being used as a transport. The submarine which fired the fatal shot was itself destroyed. The soldiers aboard the Chateaufort were saved, but ten members of the crew of the vessel were lost.

Little material damage was done by the Germans in Tuesday night's air raid over London, Essex and Kent. Ten persons were killed in London and seventy injured. Outside the capital five persons were wounded. One enemy machine was brought down and another believed to have been destroyed.

Another Spanish steamer, the Noviembre, has been torpedoed without warning by a Teutonic allied submarine.—Associated Press War Summary for Wednesday.

A WHITE STOCK HOG ABOUT two years old was taken up by me about a week ago. Owner can get him by paying expense of advertisement and other troubles. M. M. Woodall, Pine Level, Route No. 1.



On account of the recent bad weather the War Savings Stamps campaign has been delayed, but soon after the holidays it will open up in earnest.



# FOR CHRISTMAS AT HOOD'S

Combs, Brushes, Hair Receivers, Nail Files, Shoe Buttoners, Powder Boxes, Mirrors, Picture Frames, and in fact everything for your Ladies dresser in white ware. Large and varied line of exquisite Foreign and Domestic Perfumes. Sewing bags, containing articles for sewing in every way with the fingers.

<b>Manicure Sets</b> Pearl and white Ivory from <b>\$1.25 to \$10</b>	<b>Fountain Pens</b> a plenty of them from <b>\$1 up</b>	<b>Eastman Kodaks</b> The Standard of the WORLD	<b>Christmas Candles</b> 3 different sizes. All the leading brands of good Cigars.
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# HOOD BROS

ON THE SQUARE

SMITHFIELD, N. C.

