

The Mountaineer
 Published By
THE WAYNESVILLE PRINTING CO.
 Main Street Phone 137
 Waynesville, North Carolina
 The County Seat Of Haywood County

W. CURTIS RUSS Editor
 MRS. HILDA WAY GWYN Associate Editor
 W. Curtis Russ and Marion T. Bridges, Publishers

PUBLISHED EVERY THURSDAY

SUBSCRIPTION RATES
 One Year, In Haywood County \$1.50
 Six Months, In Haywood County 75c
 One Year, Outside Haywood County 2.00
 All Subscriptions Payable in Advance

Entered at the post office at Waynesville, N. C., as Second Class Mail Matter, as provided under the Act of March 3, 1879, November 29, 1914.

LibRARY notices, resolutions of respect, cards of thanks, and all notices of entertainments for profit, will be charged for at the rate of one cent per word.

Member
 NORTH CAROLINA PRESS ASSOCIATION

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1938

A GREAT SERVICE RENDERED TO HAYWOOD COUNTY

The resignation of Rufus Siler, chairman, and Dr. John H. Smathers, members, of the Board of Trustees of the Haywood County Hospital marks the close of a twelve year period of public service well done.

Mr. Siler and Dr. Smathers were appointed on the board after the bonds were issued for the erection of the county hospital. The site was to be selected and the building erected, the necessary equipment and furnishings acquired. The task they, with other members of the board undertook, was one of the biggest ever facing a public appointment in this county.

The fact that the local institution was the first hospital in North Carolina to receive aid from the Duke Endowment for the construction of a building, put the Haywood County Hospital in the limelight from the beginning, and it has held the place, yearly adding to its prestige.

The high rating of the Haywood County Hospital stands today as a monument to the splendid work accomplished by this board, on which both Mr. Siler and Dr. Smathers were important members.

The chairman of any group is by virtue of his position forced to lead the way for the other members. Mr. Siler made a study of hospitals over the state before he even engaged an architect. Each step the board took under his supervision, in the construction and development of the institution was made with first hand information and practical application.

The people of this county have seen few public officials give more careful consideration to their appointed duty than has been rendered by Mr. Siler and Dr. Smathers.

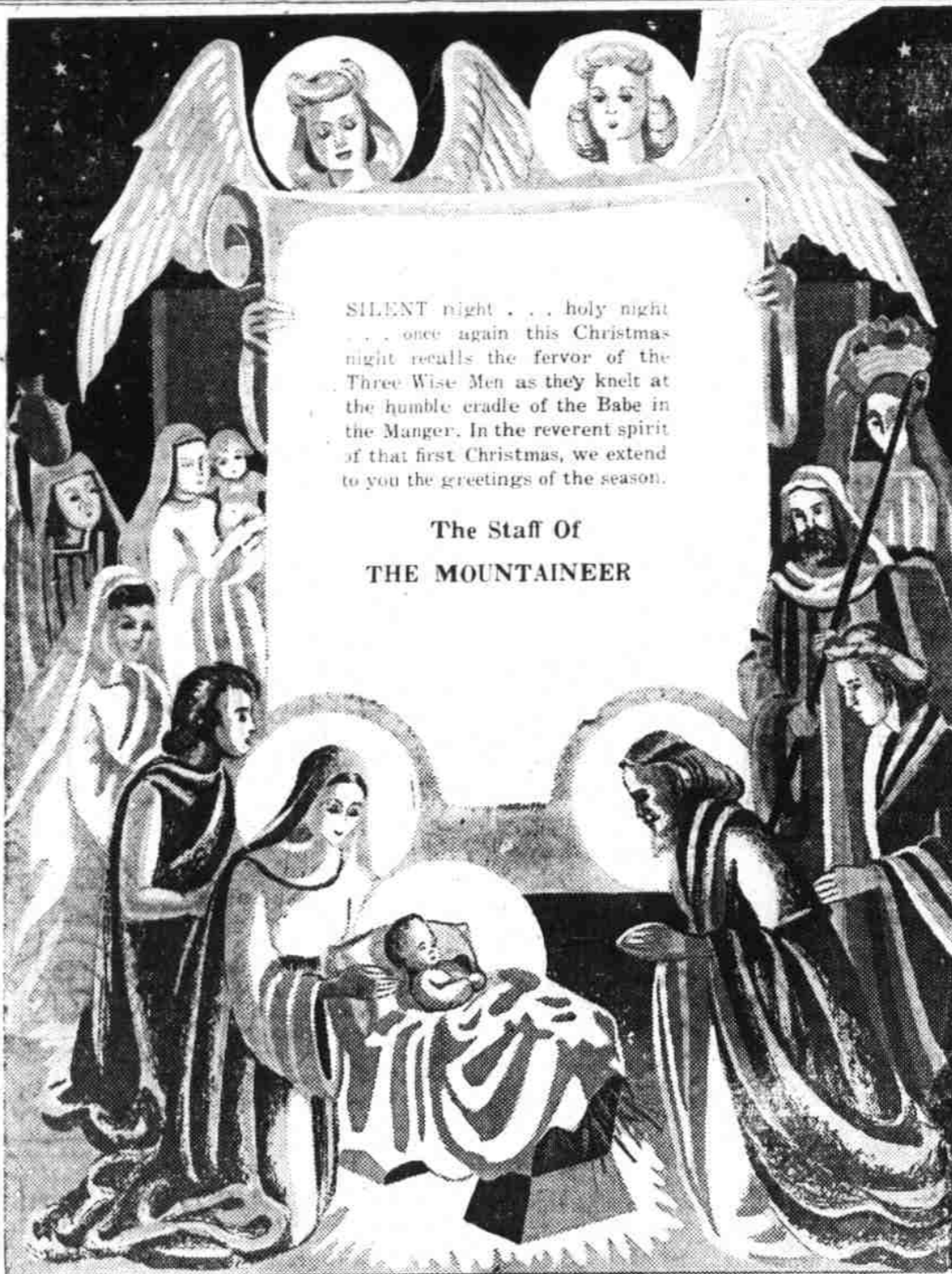
CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS AND THEIR SIGNIFICANCE

Once again Christmas is at hand and we shall bestow gifts, trim trees, bring in holly for decoration, stand beneath the mistletoe and hang up our stockings. We always go through these rituals, but how many of us know why?

Of course, this observance is to commemorate Christ's birth, and December twenty-fifth has been chosen for the celebration. There is no historical or Biblical record, however, of the exact day of Christ's nativity, but historians and astronomers have agreed that it was around the time of the year when the days were shortest. The early Christians celebrated the birth of our Saviour all the way from December 16 to January 6. It was during the reign of the Christian emperor, Constantine, in the fourth century, that the ceremonial reverence of Christmas on December twenty-fifth became an established custom. So we observe Christmas by going through a routine of customs. Yet each rite has grown out of some ancient practice, belief, superstition or legend.

The exchanging of gifts is probably the most common custom among us. Christmas would indeed lose its radiant warmth and spirit of love were we not generous givers and joyous recipients of presents. We all know that the exchange of gifts has a religious significance based on the act of the three Wise Men or Magi when they presented the Babe in the manger with treasures of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

Santa Claus has changed greatly since the first St. Nicholas. The story of St. Nicholas is a beautiful legend which runs as follows: During the reign of Caesar a man named Nicholas lived in the land of Armeon. He was a miserly rich man who had vast lands and herds of cattle and sheep. When he went to Bethlehem to pay his taxes, he dressed as a beggar in order to escape being taxed the full amount. Arriving in Bethlehem, he was too stingy to pay for a room in the inn, and was sent to the stable.



SILENT night . . . holy night
 . . . once again this Christmas
 night recalls the fervor of the
 Three Wise Men as they knelt at
 the humble cradle of the Babe in
 the Manger. In the reverent spirit
 of that first Christmas, we extend
 to you the greetings of the season.

The Staff Of
 THE MOUNTAINEER

The Christ Child was born in that stable, and when the Magi visited Him, Nicholas watched them present their treasures to the Child. He was divinely touched by the sight, and his soul was transformed from love of avarice to love of giving. Kneeling down before the Babe, he cried, "My King! my King will I serve Thee, and Thee only."

A tiny hand bestowed a blessing on Nicholas, and from outside rang the heavenly echo of the celestial chorus: "On earth peace, to men good will." Then Nicholas drew from his garb a gold piece and placed it with the gifts of the Magi.

The next morning, after Nicholas had paid his full share of taxes, he went to the market place and saw there many children. Filled with compassion for the children of poor parents, he loaded his donkey with presents and distributed them from house to house. Some of the children asked him his name, "I am Nicholas of Armeon," he replied.

"Hail, St. Nicholas!" rang the cry. Thus he became St. Nicholas, the dispenser of gifts, and the custom grew in Holland, Belgium, France, Spain and England that St. Nicholas would visit the children on Christmas.

The tradition of hanging up our stockings on Christmas Eve is closely associated with St. Nicholas. It is said at one time St. Nicholas wanted to help a poor but proud nobleman. After thinking how he might help the man without hurting his pride, he climbed to the roof of his home and dropped some coins down the chimney. The money happened to light in the man's stockings, which he had hung by the fireplace to dry. Since the nobleman considered this to be of supernatural origin, it is reasonable to believe that other people imitated him in hanging up their stockings to receive coins. Out of this legend grew the custom of hanging up stockings on Christmas Eve for St. Nicholas or for Santa Claus to fill.

The Christmas tree came into existence at the time of St. Boniface, the missionary among the German tribes. These tribes were pagan and at one time—it was one Christmas day about 1,300 years ago—they were offering a little boy as a sacrifice to their god, Thor, when St. Boniface came upon the scene. Just as the heathen priest, robed in snowy white robes, was about to fall the hammer over the child's head, St. Boniface stayed his hand, and cried to the people to cease their pagan worship. He told them the story of the birth of Christ, and felling a fir tree, gave it to them, saying: "Take this for your Christmas tree, and each year, when the feast days arrives, set it up in your homes, and with joy and song celebrate the birthday of Christ."

The custom of placing lights on the tree is attributed to Martin Luther. The story goes that Luther was out walking one Christmas night and was filled with awe at the majestic splendor of the starry heavens. Upon arriving home, he placed some lighted candles on the branches of the Christmas tree, exclaiming to his wife: "This is like the Christmas sky."

The Druids, who were priests of the pagans,

regarded the holly as the favorite tree of the fairies, and a superstition grew up regarding the good luck of holly. The early Christians were not exempt from superstition and picked up many of the customs and superstitions of the pagan tribes. Thus the early Christians decorated with holly on Christmas to bring good luck to the family, and holly has become the Christmas decoration through the ages.

The followers of paganism also attributed magic powers to the mistletoe, a parasite which grows on certain trees. It especially prefers the oak, and the Druids claimed that it was the soul of the oak, and immortal, because it remained green after the oak was dead. Therefore, it became a symbol of everlasting life, and was quite appropriate to hang in the home at Christmas time.

It was commonly hung under a door and people entering under exchanged kisses with the host of his family. From this custom grew another: young men had the privilege of kissing girls who were under the mistletoe, plucking each time a berry from the bush. When the berries were plucked, the privilege ceased. Even today, it is regarded entirely legitimate to kiss anyone under the mistletoe.

The pagans performed a ceremony of building great fires in honor of the god, Thor. This was especially true of the ancient Scandinavians; and from this ancient rite developed the English custom of kindling the log at Yuletide (an old name for Christmas time).

The Yule log was brought into the house with great ceremony on Christmas Eve, laid in the fireplace and lighted with a brand of last year's log. Sometimes the burning log was accompanied by Christmas candles; but in the cottages the only light was from the ruddy blaze of the great wood fire. The log was to

The First Christmas

And it came to pass in these days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, to be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that while they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger; because there was no room in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flocks by night, and lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them and the glory of the Lord shown round about them; and they were sore afraid. The angel said unto them, fear not, for 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 Saviour 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 hosts praising God and saying, Glory to God on the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward 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 sayings which were told them concerning this child. And all they 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.

CHRISTMASTIDE AND GIVING

"Christmas—the only festival of the year that really unites the minds and hearts of people of nearly every clime and creed, people of every heritage and tradition.

"The time for giving—when the best thing to give your enemy is forgiveness; to a friend your heart; to your child, a good example; to your mother, conduct that will make her proud of you; and to yourself, respect—and to all men, charity.

"For the best portion of a good man's life is his little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and love.

"And so I say, I believe in the spirit of Christmas, now and always, I hope the time may never come when my heart fails to quicken at the approach of youth—Christmastide." From Goldsboro News-Argus.

burn all night; if it went out, it was considered a sign of ill luck. The brand remaining from the Yule log was carefully put away to light the next year's Christmas fire.

The custom of keeping a candle burning through the eve of Christmas has of late diminished a great deal. Years ago, however, it was customary to place a thick, large candle in the window and keep it burning all night. We often read beautiful stories woven around the theme of the candle in the window.

HOLIDAY GOOD CHEER TO ALL + 1938



Alexander's Drug Store