

Saint Nicholas of Myra—who died 1,616 years ago—lived on in spirit and in name as the Patron of Children, when he kept his traditional appointment with more than 2,000 children of Firestone employees, December 20. The Christmas parties—this time, for the 19th consecutive year—feted children up to 14 years of age.

Festivities, bundled up in two parties at the Webb Theatre and one party at the Palace Theatre, dumped Yuletide cheer into the laps of more than 1,600 children who attended the shows. At the Webb there was a program at 9 and another at 11 a.m. At the Palace the show began at 10 a.m. At the Webb parties the program featured selected cartoons and short movies. At the Palace there was a full-length adventure film. And at each performance of both Gastonia theatres, Santa Claus hurried down from the Northland to supervise the distribution of gifts, handed out according to the children's age groups. Employees' children who did not attend the theatre parties received their gifts at the plant Recreation Center.

In The Afterglow Of Christmas

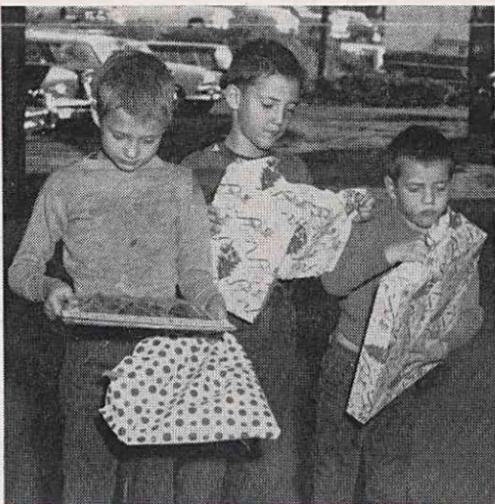
More Than 2,000 Employees' Children Feted At 19th Annual Parties



Among early arrivals for the first party at the Webb theatre were (from left): Linda Watson, Gladys Watson, Marvin Jolly, Jr. (opening door), and Danny Joe Wyke. The North Pole's most famous Citizen was on hand to greet children in the theatre lobby, before

supervising distribution of gifts at the end of the program. Denise Bell, Ricky Rumfelt and Donald Davidson, Jr., lingered awhile for a private word with the Bringer of Gifts and Good Cheer. There was plenty of suspense while several short-length movies

entertained the guests. A gripping moment in "The Three Stooges" brought serious expressions to the faces of (from left): Becky Robinson, Penny Robinson, and Michael Robinson.



Captain Roy Short of the Gastonia Police Department gave the children some pointers on how to cross the street, and other reminders on safety at Christmas time. This is a traditional part of the annual Firestone children's parties. Wrappings came off in a hurry—and into the large trash containers at the back of the Webb. These brothers were the first three children out

of the theatre at the end of the first party. They are (from left): Mike Wilson, Eddy and Bobby. The hour of excitement was approaching for those who had waited for the second party at the Webb. First in line were (front row, from left): Yvonne Saylor, Marty Saylor and Randy Ledford; and (back row, from left):

Roy Norwood, Judy Seagle, Jimmy Ledford, Douglas Seagle. Climax of the program was seeing what was underneath the colorful wrappings. Ricky Branham and his sister Cathy were pleased with what they got. Ronnie Ballard (left), and his brother Steve admired the gifts, too.



The Samuel Rhynes were typical of family groups on hand for the Palace theatre party. Phyllis, in the arms of her father, took a look at the mountain of gifts. In front of their mother (standing, from left): Faye Rhyne, Frances, Joyce and Samuel. John Ed Harris and his brother Alexander thought it was very

nice that Santa Claus would personally deliver their gifts, right under the giant Yule tree. Munching popcorn went along with the high adventure of the full-length color movie, "Manhunt in the Jungle." But popcorn called for a thirst-quencher. Lester Worthy took his turn at the water fountain, while Jo Ann

Lathan and Danny Worthy busied themselves with more of the crunchy delicacy. Just before the Venerable Gentleman from the North Country resumed his good-will travels, he had a final word with Ava Jackson. He'd be back next year.