

# Christmas Festivity Marks History

Christmas is a festive holiday that commemorates the birth of Christ. For as long as one can remember Christmas has been the most celebrated holiday of the year in America. Yet, as unusual as it sounds, many of us celebrate Christmas without really realizing its historical and spiritual value. The Biblical account of the birth of Christ is found in the Gospel According to St. Matthew, the first book in the New Testament and in St. Luke, chapter II.

The Christmas holiday had its beginning in several places and under several different conditions. Christmas is derived from the medieval "Christes Masse", the mass of

Christ. The celebration was not observed in the first centuries of the Christian church, since the Christian usage was to celebrate the death of the famous instead of their birth. The death of the Marytr, Stephen, and the massacre of the innocent children at Bethlehem had already long been celebrated when perhaps in opposition to the doctrine of the Manichaeans in the fourth century a feast was established in memory of the birth of Christ. In the fifth century the Western church ordered the feast to be celebrated on the day of the Mithraic rites of the birth of the sun, and at the close of the Saturalia, as no certain know-

ledge of the day of Christ's birth existed among the German and Celtic tribes. The winter solstice was considered an important point of the year, and to commemorate the return of the sun they held their chief festival of yule, which like other pagan celebrations, became adopted as Christmas.

As you have just read, the stories came from very lengthy ranges. And the choice is yours as to which custom you care to adopt or whether you care to adopt one at all. Before you decide, if you do, there is another version of the Holy Day. This is the birth of Christ based upon St. Luke II, 1-16 and Matthew, chapter 1-3:

"Mary, the chosen mother of Jesus, was approached by an angel, Gabriel, saying "Hail, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus." Being a virgin, Mary questioned Gabriel, saying "How shall this be, seeing I know not a man?" And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be called the Son of God.

"And it came to pass in those 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, everyone into his own city.

"And Joseph also went up from Gaililee, out of the city of Nazareth, into the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David.

"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

and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. 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 around them and they were so 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 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.

## Campus Echo

North Carolina College at Durham

Durham, North Carolina, Saturday, December 30, 1967



**RUSSIAN CONVERSATION**—Countess Alexandra Tolstoy, daughter of Russia's great novelist Leo Tolstoy, chatted after a lecture at NCC with Mrs. Christina Groenberg, a German instructor at the college, in Russian. Countess Tolstoy is at left. Waiting to meet the countess is William Crumpton, an NCC political science student. — (NCC Photo).

### Countess Tolstoy Discusses Father

The daughter of Leo Tolstoy, the author of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*, gave a lecture December 17, in the auditorium of the Education Building at North Carolina College.

Countess Alexandria Tolstoy, a citizen of the United States since 1941, spoke under the sponsorship of the college's Cultural Reading Committee and Student Union.

The speaker has written *The Tragedy of Tolstoy, I Worked for the Soviet, and Tolstoy — A Life of My Father*.

She was secretary to her father during his last years and edited the posthumously published works of Tolstoy in 1911. She purchased and distributed hundreds of acres of land to the landless in Russia after her father's death, served in World War I as a nurse, and organized schools, museums, and hospitals in many parts of Russia before coming to this country.

She has lectured at major colleges and universities throughout America and is president of the Tolstoy Foundation. She also operates a resettlement center for displaced persons and a camp for children in New York

State.

The daughter of Leo Tolstoy, claimed by Russian Communists as a father of their revolution, said that the Communist regime is worse than the czar's regime which her father opposed.

Alexandra Tolstoy said her father was a religious man and would have opposed the "godless" Communist regime as he did that of the czars.

Countess Tolstoy (although she holds the Russian title, she prefers, as an American citizen, to be called Miss Tolstoy) said she sometimes worries more about America's future than she does about Russia's.

She called for the students to "straighten out the mess we old folk made."

Miss Tolstoy told the audience that her father was a great man and a great writer because he was a humble and religious man. She told of his illustration which compares a man to a mathematical fraction.

"The numerator (the number over the line) is a man's quality. The denominator (under the line) is what he thinks of himself, so the larger the denominator, the smaller the fraction. See Countess Tolstoy Page 4

### Student Plans Play Production

By PATRICIA TROXLER

North Carolina College's own Leslie Montgomery plans to produce and direct the Thespians in their presentation of *Green Pastures* on a date to be announced. Leslie is a junior Drama major and Music minor. He is from Gastonia, North Carolina and he graduated from Highland High School. A very young, 20 years of age, Les is known to challenge the task of a huge cast. He recently directed *The Sharecropper* by George Towns. His reasons for wanting to produce the play are twofold: one, to extend his directing experience, and two, hopefully to use the financial gains from the production toward an educational tour of Broadway-New York. Leslie plans to do further study in Drama at Michigan State or New York University.

The cast will be composed of 59 characters; there are 18 scenes divided into two parts.

The *Green Pastures* is an attempt to present certain aspects of a living religion in the terms of its believers. The religion is that of thousands of Negroes in the Deep South. With terrific spiritual hunger and the greatest humility, these untutored black Christians - - many of whom cannot even read the book which is the treasure house of their faith - - have adopted the contents of the Bible to the to the consistencies of their everyday lives.

Unburdened by the differences of more educated theologians, they accept the Old Testament as a chronicle of wonders which happened to people like themselves in vague but actual places, and of rules of conduct, true acceptance of which will lead them to a tangible, three-dimensional Heaven. In this Heaven, if one has been born in a district where fish fries are popular, the angels do have magnificent fish fries through an eternity somewhat resembling a series of earthly holidays. The Lord Jehovah will be the promised comforter, a just but compassionate patriarch, the summation of all the

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### SUMMER JOBS OPEN IN EUROPE

Job opportunities in Europe this summer . . . Work this summer in the forests of Germany, on construction in Austria, on farms in Germany, Sweden and Denmark, on road construction in Norway, in industries in France and Germany.

Well, there are these jobs available as well as jobs in Ireland, Switzerland, England, France, Italy, and Holland. They are open by the consent of the governments of these countries to American university students coming to Europe the next summer.

For some years students made their way across the Atlantic to take part in the actual life of these countries. The success of this project has caused a great deal of enthusiastic interest and support both in America and Europe.

Every year, the program has been expanded to include many more students and jobs. Already, many students have made applications for next summer jobs. American-European Student Service (on a non-profitable basis) is offering these jobs to student for Germany, Scandinavia, England, Austria, Switzerland, France, Italy, and Spain. The jobs consist of forestry work, child care work (females only), farm work, hotel work (limited number available), construction work, and some other more qualified jobs requiring more specialized training.

The purpose of this program is to afford the student an opportunity to get into real living contact with the people and customs of Europe. In this way, a concrete effort can be made to learn something of the culture of Europe. In return for his or her work, the student will receive his or her room and board, plus a wage. Students should keep in mind, however, that they will be working on the European economy and wages will naturally be scaled accordingly. The working conditions

(hours, safety, regulations, legal protection, work permits) will be strictly controlled by the ministries of the countries involved.

In most cases, the employers have requested especially for American students. Hence, they are particularly interested in the student and want to make the work as interesting as possible.

They are all informed of the intent of the program, and will help the student all they can in deriving the most from his trip to Europe.

Please write for further information and application forms to: American-European Student-Service, Box 34733, FL 9490 Vaduz, Liechtenstein (Europe).

### Band Invited To Mardi Gras

The North Carolina College Marching Band has received an invitation to participate in the Mardi Gras Festival in New Orleans, Louisiana February 24 and 25, 1968, according to Joseph T. Mitchell, director of bands at North Carolina College.

The band, in order to raise money for the trip, has sponsored several activities.

The 85-member organization is presently engaged in food sales and each band member has paid \$25.00 to aid in the venture.

The Mardi Gras Festival has become an important annual event not only in New Orleans but also in Baton Rouge, Florida, and Alabama. Originally, the celebration arose from the last day of feasting and carnival preceding the 40 penitential days of Lent in the Christian calendar.

Next year's festival will mark the first time that the North Carolina College Band has attended the Mardi Gras although the band has performed in New York and Washington, D. C. for See Band Invited Page 4