



Through
THE
Looking
Glass

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Not only during the Christmas season, but every day in the year, Esther Mary Walker's "Beatitudes For Friends of The Aged" should be a yardstick for all of us.

Blessed are they who understand my faltering step and palsied hand. Blessed are they who know that my ears today must strain to catch the things they say. Bless are they who seem to know that my eyes are dim and my wits are slow.

Blessed are they who looked away when coffee spilled at table today. Blessed are they with a cheery smile who stop to chat for a little while. Blessed are they who never say, "You've told that story twice today."

Blessed are those who know the ways to bring back memories of yesterdays. Blessed are they who make it known that I'm at a loss to find the strength to carry the Cross.

Blessed are they who ease the days on my journey Home in living ways.

William Edingloh, who grows Christmas trees among other things at his nursery on the Green Springs Road, is a native of Germany. With a newsman's curiosity, we stopped by his place the other afternoon and asked him about Germany's yule trees, the first to be decorated for celebration of the Christ Child's birth.

A minute or two later, in an inconspicuous spot, he was showing us a small Norway spruce, one of several he has growing in the nursery. "This is the yule tree," he said. "It was brought indoors long before the birth of Jesus, at the time of the winter solstice, when the days start to get longer again."

According to Edingloh, a Christian missionary linked the festive tree to the story he told German children about the Babe of Bethlehem, and it became an enduring part of Christmas celebrations all around the world.

The local nurseryman doesn't grow the Norway spruce commercially. He enjoys giving the few he has to other German-born New Bernians, including Dr. D. E. H. Rodler and his wife, who also live on the Green Springs Road.

It has an aromatic quality, and Edingloh gave us a tiny sprig to take along with us. Which just goes to show you that interesting things happen not only to cats but to humans if you have enough curiosity.

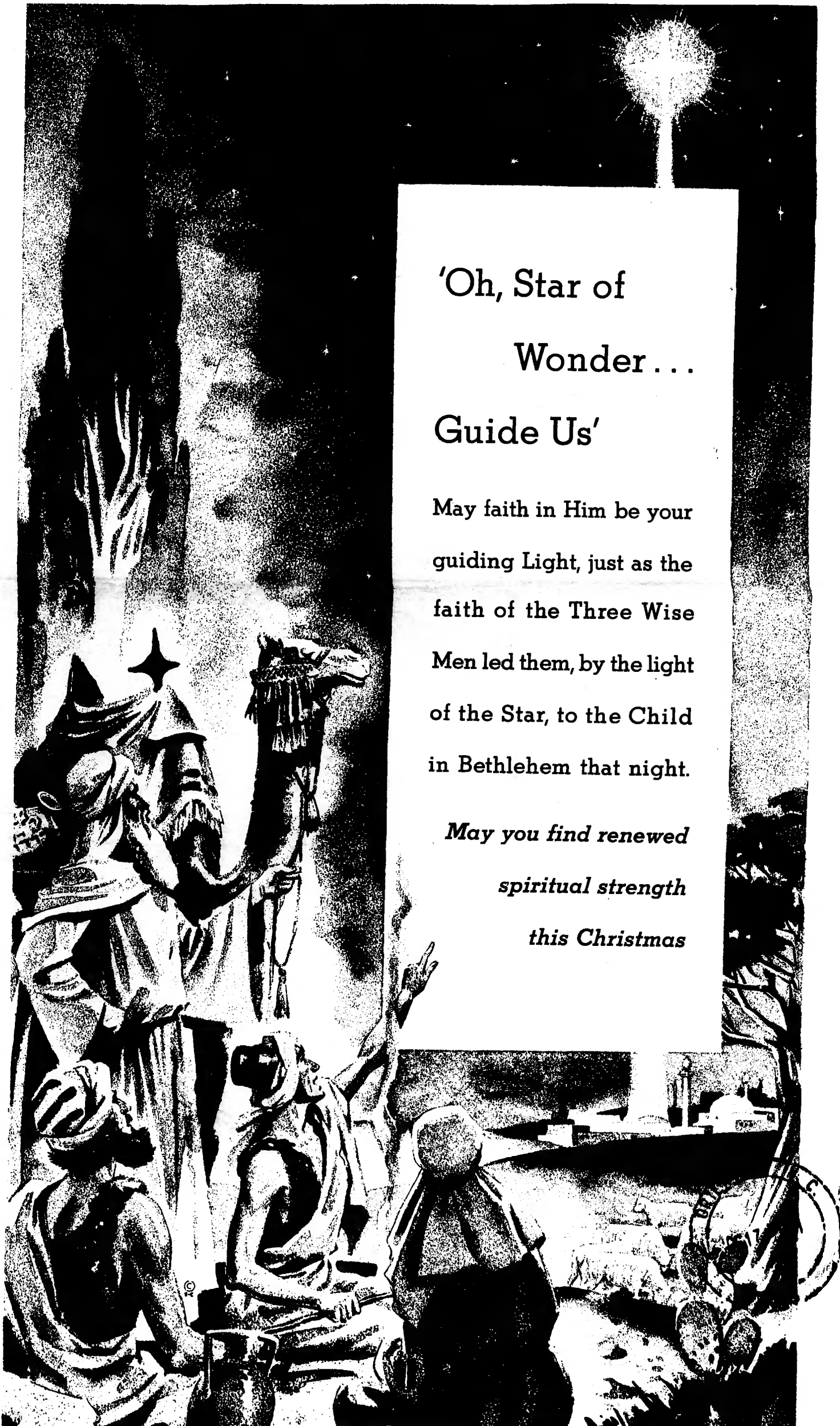
Speaking of Christmas trees, it seems only yesterday that the Mollie Heath tree, planted at the southwest corner of Christ Episcopal churchyard was just so high. Now it stands tall and resplendent with its gaily colored lights.

Quite appropriately, Santa Claus has his downtown headquarters only a few feet from the cedar. Miss Mollie, the most beloved woman to ever teach first graders in New Bern's public schools would have liked this.

If St. Nick hadn't been blessed with a good wife already, she would have been the perfect mate for him. As it was, she remained ageless to those of us who knew her in childhood, and grew up to remember her for all time to come.

Miss Mollie had the unique

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'Oh, Star of
Wonder...

Guide Us'

May faith in Him be your
guiding Light, just as the
faith of the Three Wise
Men led them, by the light
of the Star, to the Child
in Bethlehem that night.

May you find renewed
spiritual strength
this Christmas