

The Watauga Democrat

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THURSDAY, DEC. 23, 1937

The Beginning of Christmas

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, 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 (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 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 flocks 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 unto 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 in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

—St. Luke 2:1-14.

W. F. MILLER

In the death of W. Frank Miller, representative in the lower branch of the General Assembly, the community and county find unusual sadness. Mr. Miller had been honored time and again by the electorate and held positions of trust with rare devotion to the well-being of his constituency.

He radiated with good fellowship and his earthly pilgrimage was charted with a view to making the road safer and brighter for those who were to follow. We shall miss him.

KEEPING CHRISTMAS

(By Henry Van Dyke, from the "Spirit of Christmas.")

It is a good thing to observe Christmas Day. The mere marking of times and seasons, when men agree to stop work and make merry together, is a wise and wholesome custom. It helps one to feel the supremacy of the common life over the individual life.

But there is a better thing than the observance of Christmas Day, and that is, keeping Christmas.

Are you willing to forget what you have done for other people, and to remember what other people have done for you; to ignore what the world owes you, and to think what you owe the world; to put your rights in the background, and your duties in the middle distance, and your chances to a little more than your duty in the foreground; to see that your fellowmen are just as real as you are, and try to look behind their faces to their hearts, hungry for joy; to own that probably the only good reason for your existence is not what you are going to

get out of life, but what you are going to give to life; to close your book of complaints against the management of the universe, and look around you for a place where you can have a few seeds of happiness—are you willing to do these things even for a day? Then you can keep Christmas.

Are you willing to stoop down and consider the needs and the desires of little children; to remember the weakness and loneliness of people who are growing old; to stop asking how much your friends love you, and ask yourself whether you love them enough; to bear in mind the things that other people have to bear on their hearts; to try to understand what those who live in the same house with you really want, without waiting for them to tell you; to trim your lamp so that it will give more light and less smoke; and to carry it in front so that your shadow will fall behind you; to make a grave for your ugly thoughts, and a garden for your kindly feelings, with the gate open—are you willing to do these things, even for a day? Then you can keep Christmas.

Are you willing to believe that love is the strongest thing in the world—stronger than hate, stronger than evil, stronger than death—and that the blessed life which began in Bethlehem nineteen hundred years ago is the image and brightness of the Eternal Love? Then you can keep Christmas. And if you keep it for a day, why not always? But you can never keep it alone.



BY MAYRA B. SMITH THOMAS

CAROLINE told herself a dozen times a day that she did not care whether she heard from Stephen or not. What possible difference could it make now, after all these months of silence?

And here it was Christmas eve. Not a message! Not a card! Oh, well... she turned away from the window. One must not allow oneself the luxury of regret.

Fires burned brightly on the hearth. Holly hung above the man-



Caroline Was Not Alone With Her Bright Fire and Holly.

tel. Snow outside, cheer within. That was all she required. She hummed a tune in false gaiety.

A ring at the door. Stephen? No, just a messenger boy with a box. Caroline's fingers crackled the red cellophane unwrapping it. No card. Just crazy dozens of jig-saw pieces.

She walked restlessly about the room. Then she returned to the box. Black and white pieces only. Idly she fitted a few together, leaned closer and frowned. Familiar hand-writing. Stephen's hand-writing!

Excitedly she bent above the puzzle fitting the rest together. Gradually Stephen's clear strong writing stared up at her.

"Dear Caroline," it read, "if you have the patience to put this together, I shall know you are still interested in me. I could not tell you what I wanted to, before I left, because I was not sure of circumstances. But now I know. I can take care of you. Will you marry me, Caroline? A yes would be the most marvelous Christmas present in the world. I love you.

"Stephen." She laughed a little. She cried a little. Then she went to the mantel and snatched down a photograph of herself. This she cut up into small jagged pieces. On several she wrote a single word, which, when put together, read: "I have gone all to pieces, missing you." Then on the mouth of her pictured face, she added the single word "Yes."

These pieces she quickly wrapped up in the box sent to her, and dispatched it by a messenger, who admitted that a gentleman had given it to him, who was staying at the Inn in town.

In another hour Caroline was not alone with her bright fire and holly. And Christmas eve was what it should be. Stephen declared he had been too scared to come himself and sent the puzzle as a test-case. Then he kissed her.



I'm a happy little tree. I stand beside the front entrance of a white cottage on a quiet street. Each Christmas time I bloom out in beautiful colored lights, and all who pass admire my beauty and catch some gleam of the joy of Christmas.

I was not always happy like this. Once I lived in a great forest, surrounded by trees so tall I could not see the blue sky above me, and I felt very small and lonely. I longed to be tall; to look out on the big world like the others and feel the sun shining through my branches. I would stretch out my limbs as far as I could, and send my roots deeper into the earth, but my progress was so slow I grew discouraged.

One day I saw a man and a boy coming through the forest. The man carried something over his shoulder and they seemed to be looking for something. Then the boy saw me and cried: "Look, father, there is just the tree we want." He ran over to me and fairly hugged me in his eagerness. The man looked me over. "Fine," he said. But when he began digging with the thing he had carried on his shoulder I began to tremble. I felt my roots snap one by one and soon I lay a tumbled heap on the ground. Life seemed over for me.

Next I was tied to a funny looking thing on wheels, that sputtered and growled when the man and boy climbed in and we started off down a twenty little feet that wound through the forest, then out on a big shining highway until we came to a wide driveway that led through a sloping lawn to a white cottage.

Here I was untied and put into a large earthen jar filled with sand and carried to the house, and set in a corner of a big room beside a sunny window. Oh, the joy of having the sun on my branches. I began to feel less scared and to look about me.

In a big mirror opposite I could watch the man as he fastened me upright. Then he put a string of



Two Little Faces Peered Against the Window Pane.

lights from my top to my feet, fastening softly to be worked. Then I heard a door open and a rush of feet—a little boy and a girl dashed into the room, crying: "Mamma, come quick, and see our Christmas tree." They clapped their hands and danced about me. Soon the mother came with a box filled with shining lovely things and my plain green dress was covered with sparkling jewels. I hardly dared look in the mirror for I remembered I was only a humble tree after all, and what I saw could not be me at all; but the great silver star on my topmost branch made me feel very happy. I seemed to draw courage from just looking at it.

After a time I was left to myself. I was glad, as I needed to rest up a bit and get used to my strange surroundings. It grew dark outside and snow was falling; but inside my star shone and a quiet peace came over me.

Then once more the doors opened and a merry group of people came. This time there were Father and Grandfather and Grandmother, too, and mother leading the little boy and girl. Everyone was saying how lovely I was; but I did not want them to look at me. I wanted them to see two little faces outside peering against the window pane. The boy saw them first. "Look, Daddy, Mamma!" he shouted and pointed to the window. "There are two children out there. Bring them in, Daddy; give them some of our Christmas." And the little girl clasped her hands and cried: "Oh, do, Daddy, it's cold out there!"

When they were brought in looking rather scared, but glad, I was so happy I almost shook my baubles off. Then Mother made music on a big box with shining keys and everyone sang Christmas carols. Then Father told the old story of the shepherds and the Star that led to the Christ Child. Then a jolly man with a red coat and a pack on his back gave everyone presents, including the little strangers. There were candies and nuts, plenty of all, and such a babble of happy voices. I felt the thrill of it myself and the big star glowed in sympathy.

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Christmastide—When Dreams Come True



Like many another child, they decided to wait up to see Santa come down the chimney, but the wait was too long and they fell asleep. But what a thrill when they awoken!

LOCAL CHURCH SERVICES

LUTHERAN SERVICES

St. Marks, Blowing Rock: Preaching service on the first Sunday of each month at 2:30 p. m. Sunday School every Sunday at 9:45 a. m. Miss Marie Bradshaw, Superintendent; Prayer meeting Wednesday night of each week at 7:30. Luther League every Sunday, 2:30 p. m. Grace, Boone: Preaching service every Sunday at 11 a. m.; Vespers at

7 p. m. on 2nd and 4th Sundays; Sunday School every Sunday at 9:45 a. m.; Prof. George L. Sawyer, Superintendent; Luther League each Sunday night at 7 p. m.

On the fourth Sunday of each month we hold services at Hanging Rock Chapel at 2:30 p. m. The public invited.

Holy Communion Banner Elk; Preaching service on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 2:30 p. m.; Sunday School every Sunday at 9:45 a. m.; Luther League at 3 p. m. on first, second and fourth Sundays. We most heartily welcome the public to all these services.

USED WATCHES

We have 15 good watches that we have taken in on new ones during the Christmas season. Come in early and pick your choice at a bargain.

B. W. STALLINGS

Leading Jeweler Since 1933



PASTIME THEATRE BOONE

We desire to express to our many friends our appreciation of their patronage during the year. The spirit of the Christmas season, kindling anew the memories of pleasant associations, makes it a very pleasant thing to extend our sincere wishes for a right Merry Christmas and a New Year rich in worthwhile achievement.

PASTIME THEATRE BOONE, N. C. "PLACE OF GOOD SHOWS"

- DEC. 27 TO JAN. 1 MONDAY, DEC. 27 "IT'S LOVE I'M AFTER" with Leslie Howard and Bette Davis
TUESDAY, DEC. 28 "FIRST LADY" with Kay Francis and Preston Foster
WEDNESDAY, DEC. 29 "ANGEL'S HOLIDAY" with Jane Withers
THURSDAY, DEC. 30 "SUBMARINE D NO. 1" with Pat O'Brien and George Brent
FRIDAY, DEC. 31 SWEETHEART OF THE NAVY with Cecilia Parker and Eric Linden
MIDNIGHT SHOW Beginning at 12:05 FRIDAY NIGHT "FIGHT FOR YOUR LADY" with John Boles and Idi Lupin
SATURDAY, JAN. 1 "RUSTLERS' VALLEY" with William Boyd
OWL SHOW Beginning at 10:30 SATURDAY NIGHT "BLOSSOMS ON BROADWAY" with Edward Arnold and Shirley Ross

Special Bargain Matinee, 10c, 15c
Night Shows, 10c and 25c.
MATINEES AT 2:30 & 4:00
NIGHT SHOWS, 7:30 & 9:00