

THE PILOT

Southern Pines

North Carolina

"In taking over The Pilot no changes are contemplated. We will try to keep this a good paper. We will try to make a little money for all concerned. Wherever there seems to be an occasion to use our influence for the public good we will try to do it. And we will treat everybody alike."—James Boyd, May 23, 1941.

An Hue And Cry After Christmas (1645)

Any man or woman . . . that can give silver, in the Court, and in all shapes in any knowledge, or tell any tidings of an the Theatre in Whitehall, and had ring-old, old, very old grey-bearded gentle- ing, feasts, and jollitie in all places, both man, called Christmas, who was want to in the citie and countrie for his coming be a very familiar ghest, and visite all . . . whosoever can tel what is become of him, or where he may be found, let him used to appear in glittering gold, silk, and bring him back again into England . . .

Now Christmas Comes

(First printed in Williamsburg, Va., nearly two centuries ago.)

Christmas is come, hang on the Pot,
Let spits turn round and ovens be hot;
Beef, Pork, and Poultry now provide
To feast thy neighbor at this Tide.
Then wash all down with good Wine and Beer
And so with mirth conclude the Year.

Now Christmas comes, 'tis fit that we
Should feast and sing, and merry be,
Keep open House, let Fiddlers play—
A Fig for Cold, sing Care away
And may they who thereat repine
On brown Bread and on small Beer dine.

When New Year's Day is past and gone,
Christmas is with some people done,
But further some will it extend
And at Twelfth Day their Christmas end.
Some people stretch it further yet,
At Candlemas they finish it.
The Gentry carry it further still
And finish it just when they will;
They drink good Wine and eat good Cheer
And keep their Christmas all the Year.

On Christmas Eve

When He was gone, and Christ Mass came to Mary
Touching Judean hills with that strange light,
Did she see star, and gifts, and kneeling shepherds,
Or did Golgotha bruise her shrinking sight?

Could she enshroud the past in future glory,
Forget her loss and all He suffered, too,
Or did she walk in loneliness and longing
As grieving earthly mothers do?

He was her child, and she — she was His mother,
With her I share a common, bitter loss, —
Oh, teach me, Mary, Mother of our Saviour,
To see this night a star and not a cross!
—Zoe Kincaid Brockman

Great Little One whose all embracing birth
Lifts earth to heaven, stoops heaven to earth.
—Crashaw

Go Tell It

When I was a seeker
I sought both night and day,
I sought the Lord to help me
And He showed me the way.
Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born.

He made me a watchman
Up on the city wall,
And if I am a Christian,
I am the least of all.
Go tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere;
Go tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born.

(Negro Spiritual)

Entre Le Boef

Oxen and sheep thy guardians mild,
Slumber, sleep, thou little child,
Angels pure and white,
Watching all the night.
Above the slumbering child.

(Old French)

Awake The Voice

What sweeter music can we bring
Than a carol for to sing
The birth of this our heavenly King?
Awake the voice! Awake the string!
We see him come and know him ours
Who with his sunshine and his showers
Turns all the patient ground to flowers
The darling of the world is come
And fit it is we find a room
To welcome him. The nobler part
Of all the house here is the heart
Which we will give him and bequeath
This holly and this ivy wreath,
To do him honor who's the King
And Lord of all this revelling.
—Herrick

On The Mountain

On the mountain the wind blows wild;
There Mary rocks her child;
She rocks him with her snow-white hand;
His cradle has no ribbon band.
O Joseph, dearest Joseph mine,
O help me rock this babe of thine.
I cannot rock nor high nor low
For O my hand is cold as snow.
Bye-lo, bye-lo.

(German)

Christmas With The Wordsworths (1802)

24th December, 1802—Christmas Eve.
William is now sitting by me, at half-past ten o'clock. I have been . . . repeating some of his sonnets to him. Listening to his own repeating, reading some of Milton's and the ALLEGRO and PENSEROSO. It is a quick, keen frost . . .

Coleridge came this morning with Wedgwood . . . He looked well. We had to tell him of the birth of his little girl, born yesterday morning at six o'clock.

William went with them to Wytheburn in the chaise, and M. and I met W. on the Raise . . .

The sun shone now and then, and there was no wind, but all things looked cheerless and distinct; no melttings of sky into mountains, the mountains like stone work wrought up with huge hammers . . .

It is Christmas Day, Saturday, 25th December, 1802, I am thirty-one years of age. It is a dull, frosty day.

—DOROTHY WORDSWORTH

"At Christmas play, and make good cheer,
For Christmas comes but once a year."

—THOMAS TUSSER (1524?-80)



NO ONE WOULD PRAISE WAR

The Gift That Does Not Wither

As pertinent today as it was when it appeared in The New York Times two years ago is this item that assesses the meaning of the United Nations in a turbulent world at Christmas: the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount lives eternally.

On this Christmas morning, the buildings on the East River, New York City, just north of Forty-second Street, were stark and deserted against the eastern sky. Yet the Star that stood over Bethlehem so long ago perhaps stood there a moment, too. For these buildings represent an organization dedicated to "faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women." The words of the "Charter," transmuted through many languages, came out of Egypt and Greece, out of

the Arabian desert, out of the "little town of Bethlehem. If they had not been spoken there would not be a United Nations, there would not be any Charter to which even the cynical, even the professionally godless, must pay at least lip tribute.

On the eve of Christmas the Assembly was in adjournment. But the Security Council was debating, so far fruitlessly, tragic incidents that had happened on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. Twenty centuries of the New Testament, following many other centuries of the Old Testament, had not brought peace on earth, goodwill among men. Yet, in our materialistic civilization, amid the conflicts of desire, in spite of turbulent hates and new and sinister doctrines, U. N.'s great buildings had arisen and men were struggling to give them hopeful significance.

As the week was ebbing, the

old music poured from the loud speakers in the United Nations Capitol, and no one, of any faith, said it was wrong to have it. The tall Secretariat Building stood, and will, we hope, long stand, a candle toward which men's eyes cannot help turning. The Sermon on the Mount allures men still with its beauty, torments them after all the centuries with its unfulfilled aspirations. But they do not give up. They do not mock this spirit. It is in the hearts of the people even when governments turn away from it; it helped produce the Charter. It lives eternally.

Does the United Nations represent squabbles and disagreements? In some ways it does. But no one in those halls and council rooms would today praise the gods of war. This is the gift the first Christmas gave the world: this is the gift that does not wither.

Gay On Christmas

When rosemary and bays, the poet's crown,
Are bawled, in frequent cries through all the town;
Then judge the festival of Christmas near,—
Christmas, the joyous period of the year.
Now with bright holly all your temples strow,
With Laurel green, and sacred mistletoe;
Now, heaven-born Charity! thy blessings shed,
Bid meagre want uprear her sickly head,
Bid shivering limbs be warm; let Plenty's bowl
In humble roofs, make glad the needy soul!
See, see! the heaven-born maid her blessings shed;
Lo, meagre Want uprears her sickly head;
Clothed are the naked, and the needy glad,
While selfish Avarice alone is sad.

—JOHN GAY

Some Christmas Verses

How shall we love thee, holy hidden being,
If we love not the world which thou hast made?
O give us brother-love for better seeing
Thy word, made flesh and in a manger laid;
Thy kingdom come, O Lord, thy will be done.
—Housman

Tonight the world's great heart becomes an inn
Where love may, for a season, make its dwelling.
Above earth's old disorder and its din
Unearthly harmonies are strangely swelling.
Across the wasteland of our greed and sin
We hear the mystery the skies are telling.

Grains of Sand

CHRISTMAS POTPOURRI

Carol Custom

The custom of singing Christmas carols dates back to ancient times when waifs and minstrels sang them in the streets.

The first true Christmas carols, which spread to many European countries, originated in Italy during the thirteenth century. These carols, with their folksong-like quality and childlike simplicity, gave way in popularity to more dignified and solemn Christmas hymns.

The Holy Birth

As fits the holy Christmas birth,
Be this, good friends, our carol still—
Be peace on earth, be peace on earth,
To men of gentle will.
—Thackeray.

The First Tree

How was the first Christmas tree decorated?

According to legend, when Christ was born, a group of stars looked down upon an olive tree, a date palm and a pine tree which stood over the manger. Seeing that the pine had nothing to offer in His honor while the others gave fruit and dates, they descended from the heavens to rest upon the pine's boughs as an offering—and that was the first Christmas tree.

In Other Lands

In Ireland, only women named Mary may snuff the candles in church on Christmas Eve.

Gifts are exchanged in Holland on December 6, not Christmas Day.

Some Scandinavian families place all their shoes together on Christmas Day, in the belief that this will cause harmonious living through the year.

In Nova Scotia, it is considered bad luck to take a Christmas tree down before the end of New Year's Day.

300 Years Old

Sometimes it seems that the older the Christmas verses or carols, the lovelier they are. Take, for instance, Johann Kist's "O Light of Peace" (1641):

Break forth, O beauteous heavenly light,
And usher in the morning;
Ye shepherds, shrink not with afright,
But hear the angel's warning.
This child, this little helpless boy,
Shall be our confidence and joy.
The power of hell overthrowing,
At last our peace bestowing.

She Needed It

Placing of barrels in grocery stores for contributions of food items to the VFW Christmas Cheer program brought to mind an incident of the food collection last year.

An old woman, poorly dressed, was seen staring at one of the barrels in a local store. On it was the sign, "For The Needy." Finally, she approached the barrel hesitatingly, took out a small item, read the sign again to be sure she was right, turned and left the store.

As we heard the story, nobody stopped her. It was all too obvious that the food was going where it was supposed to go: to the needy.

Love or Spite?

"Friday, 28th December, 1711. Mr. Spectator, I am a Footman, and am in love with the Housemaid. We were all at Hot Cocks last Night in the Hall these Holidays; when I lay down and was blinded, she pulled off her Shoe and hit me with the Heel such a Rap, as almost broke my Head to Pieces.

"Pray, Sir was this Love or Spite?"
—Richard Steele in "The Spectator"

And so, a very special Merry Christmas from GRAINS.

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