

Christmas Once Illegal

Celebration of Christmas - the most widely observed religious holiday of the modern world - was at one time illegal in early American history.

Colonial New England did not celebrate Christmas, according to researchers at Compton's Pictured Encyclopedia, because the stern Puritan colonists believed that such activities were wholly pagan and forbade them by law.

Opposition of the English Puritans to festivals culminated in an act of Parliament in 1647 which abolished the observance of Christmas, Easter and Whitsuntide. This was echoed in the American colonies in 1659 when Puritans enacted a law in the general court of Massachusetts to punish those who "kept Christmas."

The law read "Whosoever shall be found observing any such day as Christmas or the like, either by forbearing of labor, feasting, or in any other way . . . shall be subject to a fine of five shillings."

The law was repealed in 1681 but many of the Puritans were not reconciled to this action. Secular reveling at Christmas had often interfered with religious devotions and offended the Puritans' moral sense.

In the Southern colonies, the planters celebrated the yuletide with feasting, singing, and dancing. On many plantations slaves were given

a holiday as long as the great yule log burned.

The latter half of the eighteenth century saw a swing of attention to the realm of economics and politics and religious controversies became of less importance. The fact that English and Hessian troops celebrated Christmas during the Revolutionary War may have added a patriotic note to the denominational controversy.

General Washington crossed the Delaware River on the night of Dec. 25, 1776, to surprise and defeat the Hessian troops stationed at Trenton, N. J. In the opinion of one writer, Washington's bold venture succeeded because the Hessians were enjoying their customary Christmas revels and failed to maintain the usual watch and patrols.

However, denominational opposition to the ecclesiastic observance of Christmas continued into the second half of the nineteenth century. An account in the New York Daily Times for December 26, 1855 read:

"The churches of the Presbyterians, Baptists, and Methodists were not open on Dec. 25 except where some Mission Schools had a celebration. Thy do not accept the day as a Holy One, but the Episcopalians, Catholic and German Churches were all open. Inside they were decked with evergreens."

In the twentieth century, all denominations have embraced Christmas widely both as a religious and as a social celebration. Today, men, women and children in every Christian land crowd into churches to give their thanks. More than one fourth of the world's population - about 800 million people profess some form of Christian faith.

The splendor and beauty of Christmas observances is very different from the humble stable in Bethlehem where Christmas was born; but the message He brought to the world is the same - "Glory be to God in the highest; and one earth peace, good will toward men."

Licensing Program Outlined

North Carolina tennagers would have a tougher time obtaining a driver's license and keeping it, under a bill which will be introduced in the 1963 General Assembly.

The Governor's Coordinating Committee on Traffic Safety, which is preparing the state's attack on traffic accidents, has released details of a bill aimed at two objectives - to make completion of a driver education course a requirement for all new drivers between the ages of 16 and 18, and to tighten the reins on violation-prone drivers up the age of 20.

In 1961 drivers under 20 made up 7.7 percent of the driving population but represented 15.5 percent of drivers involved in all accidents and 14.5 percent of drivers in all fatal accidents.

Under the bill, youngsters between 16 and 18 would have to complete a high school driver education course, or its equivalent, before applying for a driver's license or learner's permit.

Drivers up to age 20 would be known as "provisional licensees," and the accumulation of moving violations (as opposed to parking and technical infractions) would bring mandatory suspension of the provisional license in this way:

For conviction of the second moving violation - 60 days; for the third conviction - six months; for the fourth or subsequent conviction - one year.

The squeeze felt by young violators under the proposed law would come from two directions. First, suspension would come more quickly; and second, any two moving violations would be grounds for suspension purposes regardless of the weight they might carry under other provisions of the law.

Under existing law the Department of Motor Vehicles can suspend a license for two convictions of speeding over 51mph or reckless driving,

if they occur within 12 months of each other. And under the point system several violations other than speeding and reckless driving are necessary to warrant suspension.

North Carolina's privately - endowed Traffic Safety Council has voiced its support of the legislation.

"The bill is not a crackdown on all young drivers, but seeks only to penalize the few dangerous youngsters who are responsible for the alarming accident experience among young people," Executive Director Phil Ellis said.

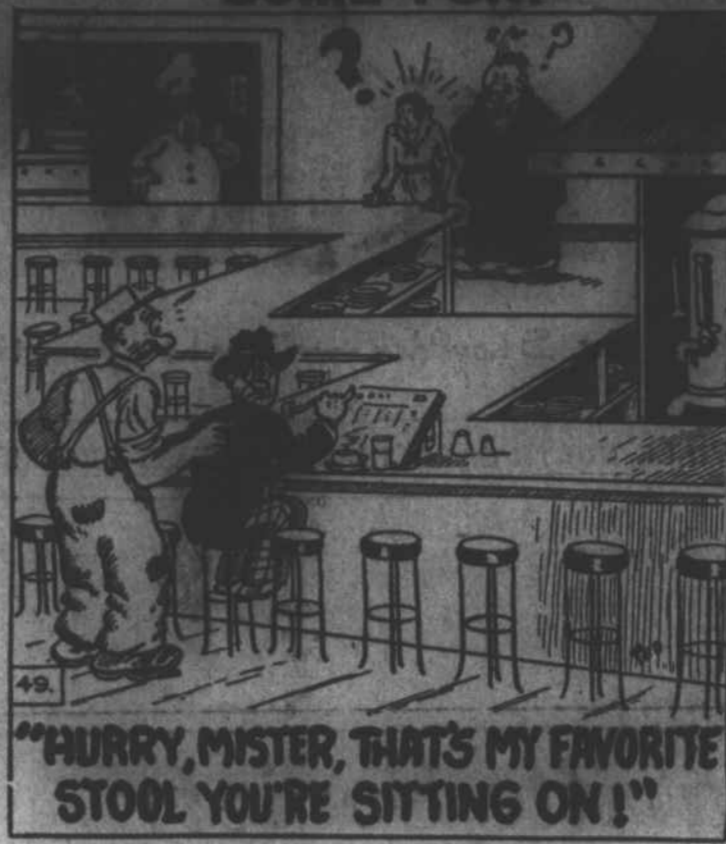
"It is a fact that some young people - and adults - seem to be more concerned about the possible loss of their licenses than the loss of their lives. Therefore, the best way to save their lives, and the lives of others, is to threaten the loss of their licenses," he said.

The Department of Public Instruction says all county and city school systems in the state are in a position to offer driving instruction at all high schools for students of beginning driver's age.

In the 1961-62 school year all of the 173 county and city school units provided elective driver education courses for 47,000 of the some 74,000 students who arrived at their 16th birthday during the school year. Approximately 25,000 Tar Heel youngsters quit school at the age of 15 each year.

The present annual revenue from the \$1. tax on the driver's license for driver education is about equal to the cost of the program at the present level. In most schools this includes the cost of automobiles and other equipment, as well as teacher salaries.

Nationwide studies recently completed show that it costs more in insurance premiums to be without driver education than the cost per pupil of a standard course, the Traffic Safety Council said.



Quips and Quotes

A direct telephone line from President Kennedy to Premier Khrushchev has been proposed. We can see a fat, bald-headed man behind the Iron Curtain picking it up and saying, "Caroline? - Caroline who?"

A popular American tune of a few years back has been adopted in Russia and could become a national hit. The title version of the Red song is "Wake the Town and Kill the People."

Apologies to James Kenan's Billy Bostic for leaving him off the list last week of those who made All-East second team. It was our embarrassing mistake.

Figures from businessmen show that a lot of people evidently count the number of Shoplifting Days left until Christmas as well as the Shopping Days.

Five million years ago a cave-man turned to his neighbor and said, "I don't care what you say, we didn't have any of this crazy weather before that tribe across the forest started using those bows and arrows."

Several North Carolina farmers reported that they were conned recently by men posing as outside toilet inspectors. They should have realized that there had to be something wrong with anyone crazy enough to take a job like that.

Hear someone went into a local filling station last week and inquired as to the price of Anti-freeze. When the attendant wanted to know if he wanted it installed in his car, he replied, "Car Hell, I want it for myself."

School And Your Child

By John Corey Education Department Appalachian State Teachers College

Report cards tell much about Junior's work in school but they can't touch what face-to-face chats with his teachers reveal. Earl L. Petrey, assistant principal of the laboratory elementary school on the campus of Appalachian State Teachers College, Boone, N. C., endorses this statement. A personal talk (called "conference" by school folks) brings to surface details about your youngster's progress which make for clearer understanding, says veteran Schoolman Petrey. Is Junior's "C" in reading, for instance, based on his being in a fast reading group or an average one? The grade has more meaning when you learn from the teacher which section he's in. What does Junior's "B" in conduct mean? Why didn't he make an "A"? Has he undesirable behavior habits you don't know about? Answers to these and other questions are obviously easier to give in private conference than on report cards. That's why every mother and father should have at least one person-to-person talk with teacher each year. November or early December is a good time to pow-wow. By then

We Refuse . . .

Several months ago, three Goldsboro high school students lost their lives in a bloody highway smashup. Investigating officers at the accident said that the death car was traveling at the high rate of speed in filling out their reports. Shortly after the tragedy most of the girl students of Goldsboro high school got together on their own and took action that might be a good practice in every high school of the state. These young ladies, bereaved over the loss of their classmates and appalled at the number of teenagers killed each year on the highway drew up and signed a pledge that they would refuse to ride in the car of any student who flagrantly and wrecklessly violated traffic laws. To their classmates, boy friends and others they were saying that speeding down the highway in souped-up cars and other such teenage mania failed to impress them. They were more concerned with safe driving and the lives and property of themselves and of others. In this day and age when a teenage non-conformer is strictly a social outcast, these young ladies have certainly shown courage and mature thinking by their actions.

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OF INTEREST

BY: Ella V. Priddy

Whom Bitchley Is It? It is a question, isn't it? Are we, by some chance, leaving him out? "When thou makest a feast," said Jesus, "call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed for they cannot recompense thee." "In as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me." (Luke 14: 13, 14) (Matthew 25:40) "Inasmuch," He says to those who fall short, "as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to Me."

It is a lovely thing to think kindly and show appreciation for one another but let us not forget the One whom this wonderful day is celebrated and through the medium of His less fortunate children, make it primarily an occasion for honoring Him. So far as the honored, One of this day is concerned, we have every need to make a thank offering, if nothing else and no matter how large we could make it, it would have, no proportion to the unpayable extent of our indebtedness.

He would like to be assured again that He didn't come to earth in vain so far as we are concerned. He would like to know that, even as He gave Himself for us, we also willing to give ourselves for Him, and to Him.

"And the secret word," a little ten-year-old once wrote in my autograph album, "Jesus first, others second, yourself last."

"Thou shalt be blessed," Jesus said. May that blessing descend on everyone of us abundantly. Mary J. Vine.

the teacher knows enough about the child for a thorough discussion of his progress. And since two-thirds of the school year remains, there's time left for him to improve. And when you go, be sure to exhibit an attitude that will elicit clear words from the teacher. A-ware that children are largely reflections of parents, she may be too tactful with unfavorable comments about Junior and soft-pedaled her words to the extent that you don't get a sharp appraisal. In this case, set the stage for clear communication. Indicate that you're objective-minded and prefer straight language without sweetening for your own ego.

For further depth appraisal, you might help by making sure these pertinent questions, listed in the National Education Association booklet, "Conference Time," are answered: -Is my child working up to his ability? -What ability group is he in, and why? -How does he get along with other children? -Does he obey? In what ways does he or doesn't he? -Does he respect rights and property of others? -How can I help at home? (Ask for specifics.) -What is my child's IQ? -Does he get to class on time? -Does he eat his lunch? -Does he have any special interests, aptitudes, or abilities? -What is the school's grading system? Frank questions and answers like these between parents and professional teacher bring invaluable information. It can help you and the teacher do your job-which is to help the child.

DEAR MINISTER EDITOR:

The folks at the country store Saturday night was paying their respects to his new 5-cent stamp they got to put on letters come January 7. Ed Doolittle said his neighbor was showing him a item in Time Magazine where France was putting out stamps now with mint-flavored glue. Ed allowed as how they ought to put a little flavoring in the glue for this new 5-center we got coming up, claimed it might take some of the bad taste out of the public's mouth.

Clem Webster said he couldn't get too excited over Ed's suggestion. He figured it would take them Congressmen 5 year to agree on a flavor. But Clem did admit it wouldn't hurt nothing for the Congress to get started on this idea at the next session.

Zeke Grubb reported he was reading a piece in the papers where the Post Officials was estimating there would be a billion Christmas cards mailed this year, that they would weigh 80,000 tons and the postage would come to around 123 million. As a general thing, Mister Editor, I always send a 16-center to my Congressman at Christmas time but on account of not knowing how he would vote on this postage hike, I'm leaving him off this year. That'll cut the estimate down a hair.

Bug Hookum was lamenting that we got another Christmas just around the corner and that things ain't no better, maybe worse. They was last Christmas, Bug claimed that all the welfare business and deficit financing has sprung up in the last 25 year. He told the folks he figured if she started down in the public schools. He says the teachers is afraid of the principals and the principals is afraid of the superintendents and the superintendents is afraid of the school boards and the school boards is afraid of the parents and the parents is afraid of the children and the children ain't afraid of God Almighty. Bug allowed as how it was time the schools give more courses in hard work and less courses in how to get along in a welfare state. He said was in favor of teaching kids in the first grade that a feller ain't got equal rights in this country unless he pulls a equal part of the load.

That was the longest speech, Mister Editor, I ever heard Bug make in all the years I been sitting in on the meetings at the country store. But the fellers liked it pretty good and Ed Doolittle even made a motion that we run Bug for some big school job come the next election. Everybody, including me, voted for the motion.

A MERRY CHRISTMAS, Mister Editor, to you and all your readers and subscribers. Yours truly, Uncle Pete

Health and Safety Tips

From The American Medical Association Arthritis in its various forms is America's greatest crippling. The causes are largely unknown and there is no known cure. Some types of arthritis come and go, get worse and then get better. Why this happens isn't understood, but we know that it does happen. Don't be misled by claims of "cures" such as fancy diets, patent medicines, trick machines, or oils to "lubricate body joints." Some patent medicines may give temporary relief, but they do not cure; they merely ease the pain.

The two major types of the disease are rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis. Symptoms of rheumatoid arthritis are a gradual onset of loss of appetite and weight; fatigue, generalized muscle weakness and morning stiffness; aching, pain, swelling in joints. When this happens SEE YOUR DOCTOR. Don't neglect these signs. Prompt and proper treatment may prevent or reduce later crippling and deformity. Osteoarthritis usually occurs in older people. Symptoms are stiffness, aching, pain in the back, hips, knees and fingers; tingling of hands. Again, SEE YOUR DOCTOR. Joint damage may be hidden. Proper treatment can do much to alleviate pain and prevent or minimize disability.

The important thing about dealing with arthritis is: Don't try to treat it yourself. You will save much suffering, time and money by following your doctor's advice about medicines and other treatment, and steering clear of claimed cures. Many research scientists all over the nation are working to try to find the causes and cures of arthritis. Studies proceed under the guidance of voluntary health agencies such as the Arthritis and Rheumatism Foundation and The National Foundation. Federal government research in this area is extensive. The researchers have uncovered promising leads that may someday bring concrete results. Until that time, arthritis will continue to be a major crippler.

Free Wheeling

By Bill Crowell

December - the 12th month - season of festivity, fellowship and good cheer. A month in which merry making reaches a climax; a bright and exciting time of Christmas parties, school vacations, shopping and holiday planning. And one of the most dangerous months of all for motorists and pedestrians! A somber note from the North Carolina Department of Motor Vehicles reveals 149 traffic deaths in December last year, 3826 injured, 6501 accidents.

Fortunately, the Thanksgiving holidays passed, not entirely death and injury free, but with considerably fewer mishaps than the previous year.

Authorities are hoping a similar downward trend will prevail as the Yule celebration approaches. But there is much to do. On slick roads, during longer hours of darkness, drivers and pedestrians alike must draw from stores of common sense to survive. The rules are familiar enough or should be. But reemphasis of life saving practices in traffic can never be taken lightly.

Some of the common sense rules of driving include adapting speed to conditions of the road, weather and traffic, allowing plenty of space between cars, using the chains if called for, applying brakes easily and carefully and paying strict attention to all traffic rules, and markings.

Pedestrians, too, must obey the law. They must be their own life-guard in traffic, not trusting motorists to look out for them. Jaywalking, cheating on traffic lights, walking with blind's practice high with packages - all such practices can prove deadly or damaging. We recall last year a statement from Motor Vehicles Commissioner Edward Scheidt roundly criticizing (and rightly) alcoholic office parties. The same should be stressed again as Christmas 1962 nears. For the drinking driver and pedestrian is a factor in a majority of the traffic accidents occurring in December.

Highway Patrol Sgt. R. A. Tripp of Graham describes vividly the plight of an innocent motorist confronted with a drinking driver: "It's not the drunk we have to worry about. That guy is all over the road, cleaning out ditches on both sides. You can spot him a mile away. The real problem is the guy who gets about five drinks in him . . . His foot is usually somewhere inside the carburetor and he's determined to get everything out of his car that he can."

"But his reactions are slow. And his brain is about 80 proof. Before you can see him coming, he's already half the people in your car."

Holiday safety can be turned into tragedy on the streets and highways by irresponsible behavior. State troopers know this and from their experience they are well aware that the approaching holidays can prove the most disastrous time of the entire year. Only you can determine the difference.

Timmy's Plight

Tennessee Ernie Ford told the following story several weeks ago on his network television program. We think it's worth retelling. The story actually happened and was revealed in a newspaper in Bethesda, Md. A Bethesda housewife answered her phone one day last week and the following conversation took place: "Hello lady, can you tell me how you get out of a snowsuit?" "Who is this?" "Tim Timmy. How do you get out of a snowsuit?" "What's your last name Timmy?" "I don't know."

"I don't know. How do you get out of a snowsuit?" "Can't you get it off?" "No, and I've got to go to the bathroom."