## *From the Diary of a Country Editor*

by Warren R. Fisher Sr.

THIS, THAT AND TOTHER

A Page From The Diary Of
A Country Editor

Up betimes for me, and for a Sunday morning, and find the day as drab and gray as only December can bring. Overhead the sky, a misty pall, gives no hint of a sun our faith must know still shines. Even the leaves of the honeysuckle and privet hedges, evergreen through last winter, are withered and drooping from early zero blasts of that twelfth month. Nature reels in naked agony, unconforted by the white, warm blanket of the snow.

And 'tis less than a fortnight till Christmas—Christmas with its riot of man-made color that will bring for a brief season a semblance of life to a dying year—Christmas which will bring to spirits that plod down the drab leagues of life's westering slope, a fleeting glimpse, if they be fortunate, of memories warm and rejuvenating. And if these be doubly fortunate, tiny fingers and golden heads and little flying feet will lead them back over the rocky slope and into the golden, sunlit years of Yesterday, the hushed, blissful anticipations and gay delights of Christmases that were.

Heigho! there is much to do, ere the sombre grayness of this cheerless Sabbath is transformed into the gaudy reds and greens of a Christmas in full flower; much to be done in shining hearts, as well as mirth to be hoped for from the weather and the purse. In which latter regard I find myself, as always, lacking.

So, sombre as the weather and seeking to find a spot of color, as I take my morning coffee, yet cannot. Even the red topknot of the downy woodpecker is absent from the suet lump on my cherry tree and his much-abused wife, poor wretch, snatches her breakfast in nervous haste. I must take down my martin's house and refurbish it against the coming of another April. That morning it perches atop its dripping pole in my gray garden with all the pathetic desolation of a house with nobody in it." And it is painted gray! Outside all is gray, sooty, colorless, cold and lifeless. Nature rests, yes her real today is that of a shivering, wretchedly clad pauper on his pallet of rags. There is no warmth without and the cold leaden light creeps indoors to starts us poking fires. We will have need of Christmas greens and holly and white berries of the mistletoe, of the flame of poinsettia and the gaudy reds of toy trumpets and little wagons in our homes, if Nature stays in the weeping doldrums.

• • •

Ah! but there is color indoors for me this morning. I hear her flying feet that pad uncertainly and very like a playful dog along the hall and to my breakfast nook as she comes with smacking lips that proffer a morning kiss. Ah, did you know, old timer, a morning kiss from one whose golden head just reaches to your knee does vie with morning coffee in its efficacy to warm the cockles of one's heart? And I love coffee, brewed rich and strong, and golden cream withal.

• • •

Is there extant one wonders, a greater bore than a fond male parent of a blonde baby girl—unless it be one afflicted with golf mania—especially if the parent be getting along—well toward what the ancients back in the gay nineties were wont to call "middle age." I doubt it. Yet we enjoy being bores and there is nothing one can do about it and no cure, except another baby, and then pretty soon the malady strikes again. Why one even discovers undreamed depths in the poetry of Sidney Guest that hard so cruelly belayed by the lofty-brows for his sopping sentimentality. Reading his "Baby In The House," one has the feeling that here is a man suffering from the same malady. That is, I have the feeling, following that dewy brushing of baby lips against my cheek. And usually I have that feeling, though it must be confessed that sometimes they yawp dismally, inexplicably and apparently unfathomably, and there is nothing for a male parent to do but go away somewhere and imagine it never happened. Poet Guest, with the license permitted makers of rhymes, ignores those occasions when babies decide to become "like Nodor, all tears." Perhaps his infant was an exception, though I doubt it. However, this rhymester one suffered a bad attack of babyitis till eager it was a civil baby and blonde and wrote about it. Witness:

Something to talk about, something to do,
Something to laugh at the whole day through,
Something to look at with pride and with glee,
Something for friends to come in just to see;
Oh, you can't sum up all the wonderful things
Of joy and delight which a new baby brings.

There's a smile that is brighter than sunbeams of May,
A song of farewell as you're starting away,
A glad time of frolic which no one can steal,
A thrill inexpressible, lovely to feel.
There's something to boast of and something to tell
When a baby has come to the place where you dwell.

There's never an hour that is lonely and drear;
The days are filled up to the top with good cheer.
You have someone to play with and someone to sing to,
Someone to romp with and someone to cling to;
And always you're finding some pleasure that's new
When God has sent down a glad baby to you.

• • •

But however maudlin fond male parents of baby daughters may seem to other folk, it comes to me this drab, gray morning, that dimpled hands and uncertain, pattering feet will guide me back again onto the sunlit slope of the Road to Yesterday, to the joy of Christmas that I had thought gone to me forever. For it is five years now, since a little lad walked out of the fairyland of Christmas enchantment, leaving a greater lump in the throats of his parents, as always, than came into his own. And I wrote one midnight, as the embers burned to a glowing heap, bidding farewell to all Christmases at our house, as follows:

We know a little lad who has stepped straight out of that fairy land of enchantment where dwells the patron saint of all innocent childhood. For him Santa Claus of the ruddy cheeks and snowy locks, the tinkling sleigh bells and gallopting reindeer is to live in the delicious, hushed anticipation of a Christmas Eve no more forever. Into the limbo of infant memories goes this tender myth for him, not without a tear, but bravely withal, for knowledge is sweet beneath its bitter coating and one must pass gallantly into the Land of Big Boy.

Rather is it the sentimental parent, who, musing on the passing of a perfect faith, is fain to drop a tear. For what faith so beautiful may come to one again? Were that possible, could there be given such simple fealty to the Man of Galilee, who himself preached a flaming doctrine of love and of whom the patron saint of little curly heads is a prototype, what a world this would be!

We are glad, little lad, that you passed over right gallantly from the Land of Make Believe into the Land of Reality—and yet as we look ahead for you into the Land of Disillusionment, which is Life, we mourn for the faith that is gone, the faith which saw the marks of Kris Kringle's sleigh runners in the sooty chimney, that heard in the peaceful stillness of a Christmas eve the tinkle of elfin bells. We know that some day the memories of these years will be sweet to you and more.

For in life there is questioning, doubt, disillusion and unbelief and the way is marked by the phantom ghosts of vanished dreams and strewn with the ashes of blasted hopes. And one needs to look back to the simple, tender faith of innocent childhood, the faith which makes the whole world kin at Christmas time and creates from the heart of humanity a mythical being of unselfishness and boundless love. One needs to know that this faith was once his own.

• • •

So, heartened by my thoughts, and the day somehow brighter, despite the weather. Proverbs are proverbially contradictory and I have abominated them since the old Spencerian copybook days, making their last gasp as I began learning to hold a pen, but "there's nothing either good nor bad, but thinking makes it so," has more wisdom in its clever words than many lengthy preachments. And if you have a pleasant-thought stimulator and she has blue eyes and one dimple and (Lord help us, another attack!) well, anyhow you feel better and grow downright pollyannish, even if the weather is so abominable and depressing that a gallant fellow like the blackcapped chickadee forgets to sing over his breakfast suet.

So to romp with my fledgling, who begins to reach out with her mind for concepts, as she reaches out with her hands for everything within reach these days; to read a bit in Beebe's "Log of the Sun," a delightful book of furred and feathered folk and a few of the myriads of our insect world. At length up into the town and at this, that and tother and finally force, myself to write letters, a sorry task, but bringing a sense of satisfaction and worthiness when finished. To cast my accounts a bit, with fewer sighs than usual, though sighs are more appropriate this December than last, and fewer only because, I suppose, I grow used so my indigence.

Presently home to dinner and mince pie for dessert, a pastry that my wife, poor wretch, makes with the cunning of a born cook. And mighty content thereafter to smoke and drowse the afternoon away.

At night to write a bit and read much and long after all sensible folk are abed to sit by the dying fire and dream. To dream somehow of Christmas; to turn over again in my mind with relish the thought that I am to see once more the unfolding of a beautiful belief in the mind of a child. In the stillness a gust of rain pattered . . . "and then in a twinkling I heard on the roof the prancing and pawing of each little hoof" . . . beautiful legend of Saint Nicholas, that some top-lofty and hard-boiled moderns term a "silly myth." Do you remember, old timer, how real the picture painted by that poem seemed?

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced through their heads.

Do you remember the warm safety of your bed on the night before Christmas, the shadows made by the flickering firelight, dark in the corners of the room, going out, coming back, everything quiet?

. . . and all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse . . .

Do you remember the stockings hung from the mantel, the cakes left on the warm hearth for Old Santa?

The stockings were hung by the chimney with care.

In the hope that Saint Nicholas soon would be there.

The sense of delicious drowsy anticipation of tomorrow, do you remember that? The desire to stay awake a little longer . . . going . . . going . . . a distant tinkle of sleigh bells . . . in the mind's ear, or did one really hear them? . . . a failing ember . . . shadows flick out longer . . . going . . . going . . .

But I heard him exclaim ere he drove out of sight,
"Merry Christmas to all and to all a goodnight."

So, after a while, with many pleasing drowsy memories, to sleep.

## A Little Yappin'

by Nellie Crump

**News Here and Yonder**

Rev. James Bates, Mrs. Bates and two children have arrived from Winchester to pastor the Carlisle Pilgrim Holiness church at Main and Dorsey avenue which was recently vacated by Rev. Clarence Hamm and family who were transferred to Louisiana to pastor a new church in Shreveport.

Our High street neighbor Frank Huddleson, who has been very ill, underwent surgery last week. His daughter, Mrs. Allen Eads, of St. Petersburg, Fla., has been at his bedside.

Mrs. Clara B. Sapp has moved to the Baker cottage on McCracken street recently purchased by Jay Pryor.

Mrs. Sophia Jackson and Frank have moved from the Shrout cottage on Morgan street to the cottage near the Dorsey bridge.

Tiger, my pet cat, was found badly wounded in an unknown manner and died during the week.

Mr. and Mrs. Donnie Rawlings bought a home on Walnut street and have moved from the McCarty cottage on McCracken.

—Yap—

**The Christmas Parade.**

All those pretty days last week I was mostly a shutin but was out in the yard Saturday when Henry, youngest of the Marshall clan next door, asked if I were going to the Christmas parade, some night. To which I had to reply that I could not because there would be no place to sit and I could not stand, so would stay home and listen to the bands. In a flash he had it all planned. "You can ride with us and 'thay in the back seat." Now, wasn't that sweet? So I had to tell him the car would be too crowded. I haven't seen Henry since.

Sunday morning while I was sweeping the porch, Mr. Marshall was waiting for the family to get in the car for Sunday School, so I asked him how was the Christmas parade and he replied "all right" which makes this official.

Although Carlisle has had three or four such parades, it has never been so I could attend. When the hour came last Saturday night, I wrapped up good and went out on the porch. All I could hear was traffic around here and the rat-a-tat-tat as of marching feet coming over the cemetery hill. Some guy was yelling with all the strength he had. I could not understand a word he had to say, although the noise was exactly like that of Mayor Bill Power, but I cannot say for sure.

By this time I was cold so came inside and read Psalms of David until time for the Lawrence Welk program. Up before day and watched from my kitchen window the most inspiring view of the Star of Bethlehem — or Christmas Star, as some call it. As I ate breakfast a wonderful radio sermon came from Michigan in which the speaker declared a lot of people (not all) had made a holiday out of the Holy season and only have time to think of minutes and miles.

—Yap—

**Just Gotta Have Faith.**

Undoubtedly, my friend and neighbor, Watson Snapp, can make more racket than anyone I ever met! A short time back I thought the house was coming down, but it was only Watt lumbering up the front steps as he talked to himself loud enough to be heard clean to the railroad, then he yelled, "Hey, Mit Nellie, come and get these here buckeyes Jay Pryor sent ya." There he was with both hands full of buckeyes.

Ycu see a long time ago, Mr. Pryor was doing some work at one of his houses as I passed by. He asked 'how come' when he noticed I was limping even with the aid of an old mop handle. When informed that either old age or rheumatism had a strangle hold he said, "Well I don't know about old age, but if its 'rumatis' you get a buckeye and carry it in yer pocket and it'll cure ya." When I sorta smiled, he added, "Of course ya gotta have faith or no medicine will do any good — I'll bring ya a new buckeye — I got lots of 'em."

Noting his concern, I promised to carry the buckeye at all times. A few days later enough buckeyes were lined up on my front porch for every pocket on the place. Queerest part about the whole thing the limping did improve! As Bessie left for school one morning she didn't bat an eyelash when she asked, "Mit Nellie, will you let me have one of your buckeyes to take to school for my sore toe?" Ah, the faith of a little child!

—Yaps—All . . .

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## Twenty and Forty Years Ago . . .

**Thursday, Dec. 3, 1942**

Housewives of Carlisle are asked to save their tin cans for the duration. When emptying the can wash, remove the paper, cut both ends out and mash the can. The City truck will pick them up on Tuesday of each week, if they are placed alongside the garbage can, preferably in a box so they may be easily loaded.

Prices were generally steady Tuesday as the Farmers Stock Yards held its regular weekly auction here with 575 head of livestock.

Nicholas county will go "dry" in fact next week, as the sale of legal whiskey and beer here will stop Friday midnight, December 11. The closing will be the result of a local option election held in Nicholas in October, when the Dry forces were the winner by a mortality of about 500 votes.

Thanksgiving Day was a spent as a day of prayer and service by 54 ladies in making surgical dressings. One thousand seven hundred and fifty bandages were made.

BORN — To County Circuit Clerk Lacy Barnett and Mrs. Barnett, a son Saturday night at the Johnson Memorial hospital. — To Mr. and Mrs. George Bowles a daughter Sunday at the Johnson Memorial hospital — Mr. and Mrs. Millard Feeback of East Union road, are receiving sympathy over the loss of their baby son born Saturday night at the Johnson Memorial hospital.

MARRIED — Mr. and Mrs. Harry Decker Richards announce the marriage of their daughter Mary Esther, to Lieutenant William Paul Mathers, United States Army Air Corps, Thursday the 12, November in Brookline, Pennsylvania.

DIED — Miss Mary Lou Snapp, 67, a native of Nicholas county, Friday at the home of her brother Ora Snapp near Milford.—Rolla Edward Hammonds, 56, at Hillsboro, Ohio, November 26, he was raised in Nicholas County.—Gilbert Orville Gaunce, 79, at his home near Headquarters Tuesday night.—Mrs. Ed George, 63, at her home Tuesday night on the Pleasant Spring road.

**Thursday, Nov. 7, 1922**

Fire originating in an overheated chimney at the residence of Samuel Holmes on Chestnut street last Thursday morning caused an alarm of fire to be turned in. The fire was extinguished before the arrival of the engine with very little damage.

A rumor has been current here for the past several days that the Kentucky Utilities Company is on a deal for the purchase of the plant of the Carlisle Electric Light and Power Co. Officials of the local company would not comment on the matter. A representative of the Utilitiy Company has been here this week making a suvey of the town.

E. D. Goodwin has leased the room in the Kimbrough hotel building formerly occupied by Joe Gordon and will open a restaurant soon.

BORN — To Mr. and Mrs. John Mathias a daughter Monday, December 5.—To Mr. and Mrs. C. W. Black of Frankfort, a son at the St. Joseph's hospital, Lexington, Wednesday November 29. Mrs. Black was formerly Miss Lucy Berry of this city.

MARRIED—Miss Katherine Williams, daughter of Mrs. Alice Williams and Guy Dwelly, son of Mr. and Mrs. Perry Dwelly, both of this county last Thursday. —Miss Jennie B. Leggett and Luther Ratliff were issued a license last Thursday.—Miss Lottie B. Clavell, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. George E. Clavell, and William Goebel Cassity, son of Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Cassity, of Upper Lick were married last Thursday, by the Rev. Bela Metcalf.

DIED — George Samhammer, son-in-law of B. F. Snelling of this city at his home in Cincinnati Saturday.—Riley McFarland, aged 49, at his home in Illinois November 28.

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## Saltwell

by Mrs. Fred Hollar

Mr. and Mrs. Calvert Sosby and Mrs. Gene Kenney visited Clarence Cook at Oddville one day the past week. Mr. Cook remains ill.

Mrs. Ermine Kenney underwent surgery at Nicholas County hospital last Friday and remains a patient there.

Gary Cain spent Friday night with Dennis and Jimmy Cropper.

Mrs. Melia Hollar and Mrs. Grace Earlywine returned home on Sunday after a weeks stay at St. Joseph hospital in Lexington for treatment.

Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Endicott spent Sunday with relatives here.

Miss Louella Cain of Cincinnati and Miss Alma Mattox of Paris spent Saturday night with Mr. and Mrs. Richard Cain and family.

Mrs. Fritz Gaunce who has been a patient at Nicholas County hospital the past two weeks was moved to her home here on Sunday.

Mr. and Mrs. Bill McDonald of Dayton, Ohio, spent Sunday with Mr. and Mrs. Floyd McDonald and Fred.

Mr. and Mrs. Jesse Alexander of Ky. Village, spent Friday night with Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Allison.

Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Kenney were in Lexington on Friday night to visit Mrs. Lovell Kenney who is a patient at a hospital there.

Rev. and Mrs. Wilburn Cropper and sons were in Butler on Sunday where Mr. Cropper assisted in the funeral of J. Barnhill.

Charles Hall entered the Veterans hospital in Lexington on Monday and remains there for treatment.

Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Combs, Mrs. Ray Myers of near Lexington, Strauder Hollar and Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Hollar spent Sunday with Mrs. Biddie Hollar and son.

Gary Lee Hollar spent Sunday with Kenney Wayne Gaunce.

Mr. and Mrs. Fred Sswell and baby on returning home from Florida the past week. They spent Tuesday with Sterling and Layne Hollar of Clarksville, Tenn.

**Nicholas News From Up on the Hill**

by Ralph Wesley and Ed Taylor

Two foul shots by Jackie Fryman with 8 seconds remaining in the game gave Nicholas county the sufficient margin to beat Montgomery county by a 49-48 margin. The Tuesday night ball game, in which Jackie Fryman sacked 21 points, was played in the local gym.

Last Friday night Nicholas County lost to Fleming County by 56-49 as Fleming County edged ahead in the last two minutes with superior rebounding. This gives Nicholas a 2-2 record. The Blue Jackets will play University High, Lexington this Friday night.

The Future Farmer's Club has scheduled a donkey ball game for Saturday night. The game will be proceeded by a faculty-FHA ball game.

The debate team will travel to Seneca high school, Louisville on Saturday to attend a forensic tournament.

The better home living class, accompanied by Miss Janet Jordan, went on a field trip to Coatney's Brothers supermarket to study a unit on "feeding the family."

The Senior class has completed the 1963 Nicholas Countian selling a record number of annuals and advertisements. The Class also netted $20 from gasoline sales at Luther Hollar's service station; the money is to be used on the class trip to New York.

The band presented some new routines in Christmas parades at Paris and Carlisle, they are now starting work on music for the contest at Morehead in March.

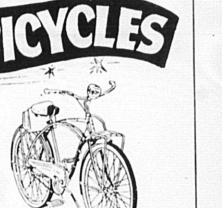
Next week's reporters will be Danny Wayne Smith and David Keith Wagoner.

A special event that is coming up in FFA is known as the Donkey Ballgame. This event comes every two years and this year it is going to be in the last of December or first of January. So be watching for this event.

WANT ADS PAY OFF!

Don't forget that letter to Santa. Letters from children not over 12 years of age will be printed in The Mercury.

**BICYCLES**



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