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Farm & Home

One of the great passages in English literature occurs in Geoffrey Chaucer's *Parson's Tale*. Because his life had been framed by evil circumstances, Chaucer had become a thoroughly selfish man. In his loneliness and humiliated, he had been the only pleasure he had left. Then one winter night a lovely child found her way to his fireside. And looking into Eppie's eyes he beheld such beauty and wonder as he had never seen before. He was shaken out of his selfishness and pride. Nothing else had ever been able to destroy his selfishness, but a little child captured his heart and took away all the selfishness and pride he had. He was never the same again.

J. B. Hogz, Lt. William B. Parker has arrived in New Guinea according to word received by his parents, Mr. and Mrs. James Parker. DIED: James Terry, 84, died Thursday at home. Mrs. Clinton Clay, 65, died Dec. 20, at Johnson Memorial hospital. Mrs. Julia Wain Salmon died Dec. 21 at home in Paris, Dec. 20.—Mrs. C. W. Rose, 57, died Tuesday at home in Myers.—Arch Botte, 72, died Friday at home in Montgomery county. Mrs. Louis Scott of Chicago, spending Christmas with his mother, Mrs. N. P. Scott. Young people home from college for Christmas vacation: Misses Louise Kennedy, Elizabeth Harper, Mabel Reed, Lois Talbert, Ruth Barton, Ruth Collier, Glennie Fisher, Elizabeth Holmes, Elizabeth Cole, Nealy Burgess, Messrs. Everett Smith, Henry Harper, Frank Cummings, John Squires, and John B. Wilson.

40 Years Ago
December 25, 1924
Warmest December in memory of oldest inhabitant, 68 degrees on Dec. 15.
Prof. Erle leaves for Chicago, Frank Cummings, John Squires, and John B. Wilson.

and Nicholas County children receive gifts at community Christmas tree.
Mrs. Duke Williams of Detroit, visiting brother, E. B. West and family, guests of Miss Evidant, soured in Richmond.
Prof. Joe J. Embry spending holiday in Stanford.
Miss Mary Brock of Dwight, Ill., visiting parents Mr. and Mrs. R. N. Brock for Christmas.
Louis Scott of Chicago, spending Christmas with his mother, Mrs. N. P. Scott.
Young people home from college for Christmas vacation: Misses Louise Kennedy, Elizabeth Harper, Mabel Reed, Lois Talbert, Ruth Barton, Ruth Collier, Glennie Fisher, Elizabeth Holmes, Elizabeth Cole, Nealy Burgess, Messrs. Everett Smith, Henry Harper, Frank Cummings, John Squires, and John B. Wilson.



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CHRISTMAS

In my old home we eagerly looked forward to Christmas. We always felt the spirit of the day and were always happy with each other. I sometimes wonder about it now. I am almost afraid for children—they have so much that there seems little left for them to anticipate or really enjoy. I believe in Santa Claus, believed even when older boys laughed at me for my faith. We had no fireplace, only a wood stove, but I could not figure out just how the wonderful old gentleman got in, but I was sure

that he did, nevertheless. The fact that I believed in him took care of the details. Contrary to present-day argument, this faith did not affect my later life unfavorably. When I discovered that Santa Claus was a disembodied spirit, all was well. My deeper faith in God and Jesus was not destroyed. I am glad that I had this childhood thrill and vivid experience. It has blessed me all these years.—From *Lines of a Lawyer*, by the late Penney, copyright 1956. Published by Channel Press, Inc.

From the Diary of a Country Editor

When at the snowy hill
And the bare woods are still;
When mistle are silent in the frozen bogs,
And all the garden grass is whitemed in mix,
Lo, by the hearth, the daughter of the bog—
More fair than roses, lo, the flowers of fire!

ache beneath the new yarn mittens and the banks of the creek frowned and the banks of the silent it all seemed in the glow of a flaming sunset. The lovers had gone, unmindful of their cravable trailer. Groups with their staves along over shoulders were disappearing up the steep bank. The obliging "big boy" dropped the rope and asked on—and suddenly a little lad faced the fact that he was alone and far, far from home. In a world grown suddenly cold and still and featureless.

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Something was acting queerly in his throat, as he labored up the bank to the roadway. A star popped out of his eye, and he staggered, but it was somehow necessary that there be a lone-to-lean flat to an eye before he could return the wink. One had to swallow mighty fast, when trouble in this strange marshy in the throat, and the swallows were merging into gulps, when there came the jingle of sleigh-bells.

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Never shall the young explorer forget the whimsical smile on the ruddy face of the man who drove, as he proffered his services in this fearful dilemma, nor the safe foot of his great coat, as he tucked the young explorer's feet into the "famously alight" already comfortably tucked under the young explorer's feet. "Yes, aren't you son of a gun? Like to go home?" Again the young explorer's feet were spoken always since creation's dawn.

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More fair than roses, lo, the flowers of fire!

And with her words the throat stopped misbehaving and one could wink back bravely at the evening star. And there was straw in the Kingdom of God the spirit of a little child would have pre-eminence. But wealth's words are a spoken promise to each succeeding generation at Christmas: a little child shall lead you.

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by Warren R. Fisher Sr.

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MILLIONS OF GLISTENING DROPLETS—A time exposure 1/11 at 45 seconds of a fountain near the Rhine River in Frankfurt on Main, Germany. The photograph was made by Sp. 4 John (Toby) Elder.

Festive Christmas Spirit Shines From White House

The Christmas spirit was radiated from the White House over 165 years of war and peace, joy and tragedy, prosperity and depression. The first Christmas in the White House was bleak, the National Geographic Society says. In the fall of 1800, John and Abigail Adams moved into the incomplete mansion. Though appalled by the vast, chilly rooms, Mrs. Adams was determined to hold a Christmas reception for Congress.

Twenty cords of wood were burned in 13 fireplaces in a futile effort to dry out the damp walls, and the shivering guests stayed only briefly. The party, Mrs. Adams wrote, "was a frost."

Jefferson Fiddled
Five years later, the walls were dry, and a

Children made the White House Christmas of 1835 unforgettable. Six young relatives of Andrew Jackson were told by the President that Santa Claus never had visited him when he was a boy. The children insisted that he hang up his stockings on Christmas Eve. The next morning, Jackson's secretary found Old Hickory in tears over the corn-cob pipe, tobacco, and trinkets the youngsters had surreptitiously stuffed into his stockings.

On Christmas afternoon, the children were present at a party in the East Room. Vice President Martin Van Buren joined in some of the fun. At one point he was obliged to stand on the leg and say "Here I stand all ragged and dirty, if you'll not come and kiss me, I'm ruined like a turkey."

The dinner table that night was decorated with toy animals, a small frosted pine tree, colored icicles, and a pyramid of

glinting cotton snow-balls. After dinner, the children staged a fight with the cotton balls, and President Jackson is said to have joined in.

Young Tad Lincoln invited a group of street urchins into the White House to share his Christmas dinner. The cook tried to shoo them off, but Tad appealed to his father, who said they should stay.

In 1877, a newspaper, alluding to the contested presidential election of 1876, wrote ungraciously of Rutherford B. Hayes: "This will be the first time a usurper has celebrated Christmas in the White House. But Santa Claus descends the chimney—like all on the just and the unjust." Unperturbed, Hayes and his wife remarried their wedding as a White House holiday festivity to celebrate their silver anniversary.

Benjamin Harrison is credited with ordering the first Christmas tree ever set up in the White House in 1859. The President himself helped trim it. Three years later, two of Harrison's grandchildren stood in front of another White House Christmas tree and recited German pieces their governess, Frau Henne, had taught them.

Just before Christmas, Theodore Roosevelt stood at a White House portico roaring with laughter as he watched three of his sons, hatches in hands, chase a turkey across the lawn. Another year, Arthur to Roosevelt's credit decorated an evergreen in a second-floor room and unveiled it on Christmas morning.

In 1924 Calvin Coolidge started the practice of lighting a decorative spruce on the White House lawn as the first Christmas tree in the park south of the Ellipse, and unveiled it on Christmas morning.

Mr. Hoover Paired
National Geographic tells the story of how

case, led the procession on two occasions Mr. Hoover arranged for his secretary to dress as Santa Claus and burst from the East Room in place, to the delight of the President's grandchildren.

Franklin D. Roosevelt and his large family celebrated Christmas with a sermon of White and blue parties and gatherings for family, friends, and staff. The high points on Christmas Eve and Christmas morning were the parents, children, grandchildren—gathered in the East Room for the President's masterful reading of "A Christmas Carol." Then adults and children alike would recite from the bedroom to hang up stockings.

Mrs. Eisenhower usually wore a bright-red dress while presiding at holiday parties for her grandchildren. Throughout Christmas Day, 1951 and 1952, the mansion was decorated with parties and receptions were held during the holiday season.

In 1961, a group of orphans was invited to a Christmas party at the White House. A young girl was asked if she knew whose house it was. "Yes," she replied, "it's my grandmother's house."

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