

Journey To Bethlehem



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 Judaea, 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.

St. Luke 2: 1-4

Merry? Christmas

Christmas can be a joyous time of year. It can cause happy wonder to shine in the eyes of a little

boy or girl. It can bring great joy into a child's life. It can awaken faith. But unfortunately for some children, Christmas this year may be a disappointment. It may be looking in store windows at toys their parents can't afford to buy, or suffering for lack of adequate clothing, or simply experiencing a feeling of utter loneliness.

This need not be; for The Salvation Army, on your behalf reaches out to such children and makes possible for them the thrill of opening gifts, the treat of enjoying a special holiday dinner, the warm feeling of wearing new clothes.

Yes, The Salvation Army knows many, many troubled people, both young and old. It tries to make Christmas happy and meaningful by providing friendship and material assistance for the less fortunate in communities all across Canada.

Fathers who will spend Christmas behind prison bars, the sick and lonely in hospitals and other institutions and needy youngsters who know little of comfort and cheer -- all these and more will find Christmas joy this year through The Salvation Army.

Major Lloyd Eason
The Salvation Army



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Christmas in a pioneer village

Often we tend to picture Christmas in the early days of Ontario as consisting of lavish feasting and decoration - the Christmas of Dickens. This scene, however, is late Victorian, and a rather different situation is appropriate to Black Creek, a small rural village of the first half of the nineteenth century. Nowhere will you find the "groaning board" of food, but you will feel the unique atmosphere of pioneer preparations for this festive occasion. To many early settlers, Christmas was, in addition to a religious feast, a welcome break in the hard work of survival in a young country. At Black Creek you will see in each house varied preparations representing different time periods, ethnic backgrounds and economic status.

CHRISTMAS CAROLLING
To add to the Christmas scene at Black Creek, choir members from St. Philip's Lutheran Church in Islington will sing Christmas carols in various locations through the Village each Saturday and Sunday afternoon between 2:00 p.m. and 4:00 p.m., up to December 21st.

DANIEL STRONG'S FIRST HOME
This home was built in 1816 and represents an early home of the area. The Strong's being Pennsylvania

German would have a small tree simply decorated for Christmas with dyed fleece and apples. Gifts were practical and homemade, such as warm mittens and socks, and the father might whittle a small toy for his children. All cooking was done over the open fire, and Christmas food preparations were neither elaborate nor expensive.

DANIEL STRONG'S SECOND HOME

Daniel Strong built his second home in 1832. The improved prosperity of the family is indicated by the more extensive preparations for the Christmas season. The Strong's, however, were members of the Evangelical Church and so they would not believe in too much frivolity. The only signs of Christmas in this large house are to be found in the kitchen. The traditional tree is now more heavily decorated, not only with dyed fleece and apples, but also with many decorated cookies. These cookies are traditional at Christmas with the Pennsylvania Germans. Garlands of popcorn and cranberries also festoon the tree. There were still many bogs around Southern Ontario where cranberries could be gathered.

Gifts were still mainly homemade, knitted stockings, a doll made from

corn husks and perhaps an embroidered show towel for mother. But also, there may have been one or two store bought gifts.

Fruit and nuts, cookies and simple fruit cake are ready for the festivities. Traditionally, Pennsylvania German children would set out their breakfast plates the night before Christmas, in hopes of finding a supply of homemade candy in the morning.

HALF WAY HOUSE

Half Way House, an 1850 inn, though a place of business, would acknowledge the Christmas season. A centre piece on the dining room table, bowls of nuts and fruits, and a "kissing ball" strategically placed in the hall, all added to the festive atmosphere for the patrons.

THE DANIEL FLYNN HOME

Daniel Flynn was a Catholic and to him Christmas would be primarily a religious festival. In the parlour of this home, which was built in 1858, there is a small handmade nativity scene and a candle is lit in the window in hope that a priest will come by and a Mass could be celebrated.

This village family could afford a few of the Christmas luxuries available at the general store, such as inexpensive toys for the children, and embroidery wools for Mrs. Flynn.

Christmas puddings are cooking on the stove. Sometimes a few oranges and lemons would be purchased to add variety to the Christmas fare, and no part was wasted. The peel would be cooked in syrup to make candied peel, a delicious sweetmeat and treat for the children.

BURWICK HOUSE

This house was owned by the most prosperous family in Black Creek. The Burrs were of British background and their home reflects both their country of origin and their wealth. The decorations were quite

lavish with swags of evergreen and berries and a "kissing ball" hanging in the hall. There is no Christmas tree in this house. This is because decorated trees did not become popular with the British until the Royal Consort, Prince Albert, introduced a decorated tree to the Royal Family at Windsor Castle.

The gifts in this 1840's house would be of a less practical nature, some of them would be quite elegant and would have been purchased in a large town such as Toronto rather than in the Laskay Emporium.

Further signs of the family's prosperity can be seen in the food preparations - spices and candied fruits to make rich cakes, and imported fruits such as figs, dates, oranges and lemons and Christmas delicacies.

FISHERVILLE CHURCH

The church pulpit is adorned with boughs of greenery, and from the back of the church can be heard strains of the choir practising the traditional Christmas carols that are still familiar to us today.

MACKENZIE HOME

Decorations in this home reflect the commercial growth of the Village by 1867. Christmas trees were becoming increasingly popular, and there is a combination of homemade and store bought decorations on the Mackenzie's tree.

The concept of Santa Claus was known in Canada by the mid 1850's, and many children hung their stockings on Christmas Eve just as they do today. Most of the Christmas gifts would have been purchased.

DOMINION CARRIAGE WORKS

The Village woodworker rents the east wing of this building. For the Christmas season he turns his talents to making a variety of simple wooden toys and games to delight children on Christmas Day.



This Christmas wreath is made from garbage bag flowerlets and costs only pennies. The whole family can get into the Christmas spirit making these decorations.

The same method applies to making the Christmas tree. The base of the tree is a styro-foam cone. Attach the flowerlets starting from the top and work towards the base. The addition of silver balls or ribbons gives the final festive touch.

Cut Costs with Christmas Crafts

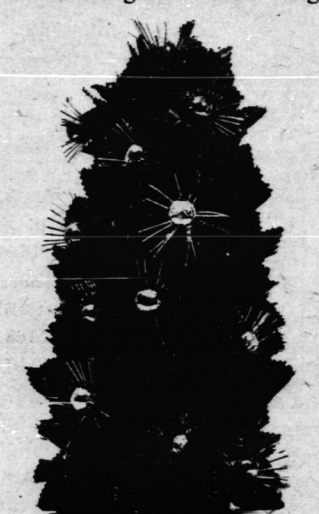
Don't worry about finding last year's Christmas decorations lying crumpled and lifeless in the bottom of a box. Instead of going out to fight the crowds of shoppers, you and your family can have fun making your own decorations from the kitchen stand-by... the green garbage bag.

The articles shown here are simple to make and certainly much less expensive than the store-bought variety.

Miniature Christmas trees, wreaths, table decorations or laurel ropes... the possibilities are limited only by your imagination.

How to Make:

The basic unit for all the decorations is the single flowerlet. Cut a green "Glad" bag



This Christmas tree will make a great centerpiece for the festive table.

into 4 inch squares with a pair of pinkish shears. Place three or four layers of bag on top of each other. Pinch in the middle and twist, securing the pointed end with cellophane tape. The number of flowerlets needed depends on the decorations you have in mind. The wreath for your door would take, for instance, about two and a half green "Glad" bags. A circular styro-foam form can be purchased from any craft shop. With straight pins fasten the flowerlets on to the form overlapping them to hide the taped ends. You may wish to purchase some inexpensive red or silver balls or Christmas ribbon to add color or alternate colors of flowerlets by using white "Kitchen Catchers" or orange "Glad" garden bags. Sew a piece of string to the centre top and hang it on your door or from window frames.

I love the sounds of Christmas, like church bells chiming clear, the happy squeals of children and Jesus draws near



Fraser's Furniture
Port Rowan 586-2711

Christmas Tree Safety

The Evergreen Christmas tree, safe with intelligent use, can present a serious fire hazard if improperly handled. The difference lies in the tree's moisture content - a condition over which you have a surprising degree of control. There are three simple steps to safe enjoyment of your favourite tree:

Don't purchase a tree that has dried out. Trees that are too dry have brittle branches that shed needles easily. Test twigs and needles for flexibility.

Store tree outdoors, preferably under shade, until it is to be used. If it must be stored indoors, re-cut butt and immerse in water. Maintain water supply.

When tree is to be erected, re-cut diagonally. Stand tree in water and maintain water supply for duration of tree's use.

A tree handled in this manner will achieve a moisture content equal to, and in many cases greater than, its moisture content when cut, and will stay fresh, green and safe through the Christmas season.

TWO IMPORTANT LIMITATIONS

The effectiveness of butt immersion has two important limitations:

A tree whose moisture content has dropped to a critical point before immersion will not recover, but will continue to dry out, even when standing in water. Check tree again for flexibility 24 hours after erecting. If there is any sign of lessened flexibility in needles or twigs the tree should be removed.

Even a tree with 100 per cent moisture content will not withstand a complete ring of flames at its base. A quantity of highly combustible material, such as tissue-wrapped gifts, presents a fire hazard in itself from which the tree, and many household furnishings, will not be immune.

A FINAL SAFETY NOTE

To complete your Christmas tree fire safety program use only lighting equipment bearing the Canadian Standards Association label of approval, and make sure every wire and socket is in proper working order. Finally, use only decorations made of non-combustible or approved slow-burning material.

USE OF A FIRE-RETARDANT CHEMICAL SPRAY ON YOUR TREE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR BUTT IMMERSION, AND IS NOT RECOMMENDED.

DID YOU KNOW?

That some of Canada's aeronautical charts must be updated and reissued every 28 days to assure safety in our skyways.

There are about 291,570 square miles of fresh water in Canada.

The highest city in Canada is Rossland B.C. at 3,465 feet.



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Thank you at this holiday season for your friendship and understanding. May the Spirit of Christmas light your way in peace and goodwill.

Maynard Franklin
INSURANCE
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Care of Poinsettias

Although the poinsettia is a very sensitive plant, it can flourish for quite some time with a little extra care. It will react quickly by dropping its leaves if you allow the soil to get too dry, too wet, or if the plant is exposed to drafts. It should be placed near a warm, sunny window - but the leaves should not be permitted to touch the window. This plant should be kept away from radiators or registers. The soil should be

checked daily and it should be watered if it feels dry to the touch. The poinsettia should be stored in a cool, dry place until spring if the leaves fall. With this, watering of the plant should discontinue until the spring when it should be watered thoroughly and the stems cut back to six inches. Sprouts will then form on the sides of the stem, and these should be pinched back repeatedly until August or September.

Thoughts

by Carol Beth Herman

What's in your thoughts, when thinking of Christmas? Do you think of a wonderful baby named Jesus? A baby born in the lowly stable behind an inn. An exceptional child to whom grown men bowed down. If this preoccupies your thoughts, you're a minority. According to my sense of reason, most people today are interested only in Christmas tree, shopping, family reunions and turkey dinners. While there is nothing wrong with this, I feel if it was curbed a

bit we could have more time to think of Christ and the true meaning of Christmas. If you'll remember -- Christmas is the celebration of Jesus' birthday.

An act of kindness, thinking of an old friend or just a smile are really what Christmas spirit is all about. Enjoy decorating the tree, your reunions and dinners but at the same time enjoy the idea of celebrating Jesus' birthday. It will help to make your Christmas smile brighter and maybe your smile will last all year!



Wishing you a holiday packed with good wishes and our thanks.

VANNATTER'S
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NEWS BULLETIN...North Pole

The loading of Santa's gift bearing sleigh is well under way. Load your camera with film now to capture his arrival at your house on Christmas Day.

NEWS BULLETIN...North Pole

Santa's garage reports that the final tune-up on the famous sleigh is now complete. Last minute checks on your camera for the holidays should include the testing of batteries and the cleaning of the lens and viewfinder with a soft cloth.



Jake Reimer INSURANCE