EDITORIAL

Merry Christmas

The holiday season is a happy time. Decorations are put up in almost every home and gaily dressed Christmas trees light up windows all over our country and for that matter, throughout the year.

Children are busy, engaged in peeking into cupboards and other likely hiding places and gazing in wonderment at tinselled trees under which are piled brightly wrapped, mysterious parcels. Grown-ups are doing a little last minute wrapping and hoping that that almost forgotten card will reach its destination before Christmas day.

There is a happy, bustling spirit of good fellowship in the air and total strangers are surprised to find that a cheery smile doesn't cost them anything and yet brings warm dividends indeed. The well loved Christmas Carols are heard again after a year's silent absence and even preoccupied business men are surprised to find themselves humming these well known Yuletide hymns.

There are the smells of Christmas too, the glorious aroma of the plum pudding, which everyone in the family must stir for luck and the delightful scent of fruit cake, shortbread and cookies.

All of these things are as familiar to us as are the brightly lighted store windows, and the gaily wrapped Christmas gifts. All of them mean Christmas to us and sometimes we are inclined to forget the real reason behind Christmas.

Who among us can deny the toy at the heart we feel when we spot a ragged, shivering little figure with his or her nose pressed tightly on the breath frosted window of a toy shop? That little toy at the heart you feel is the true Spirit of Christmas, trying to force its way into a busy, modern world once more.

Resolve now to share your happiness, all year round, with others, secure in the knowledge that Bob Cratchit, his wife and Tiny Tim will live again, as once more around the world echo these wonderful words — "Merry Christmas".

Lest We Forget

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, everyone into his own city.

And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judea, 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. And so it was that while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

And the angel said unto them Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you: Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying: Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

And it came to pass as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child.

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Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.

When Herod, the king, had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born, and they said unto him, in Bethlehem of Judea: for thus it is written by the prophet, and thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, are not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee, shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, Go search diligently for the young child, and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.

When they had heard the king, they departed; and lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down and worshipped him, and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold and frankincense and myrrh.

And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.

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G. A. Dills, Editor-in-Chief

David R. Dills, Managing Editor

BUSINESS AND EDITORIAL OFFICE PHONE 600, ACTON

THE GOOD OLD DAYS

BACK IN 1938

Taken from the issue of the Free Press Thursday, Dec. 29, 1938

[illegible]

All decked out for their new steeple, people and [illegible] A New Leader [illegible] 1938-39 [illegible] the box. The [illegible] turned in a nice game. One doubt they had had only one practice.

Acton's import list of Kemptville Cox and Bruce Leslie's good [illegible] both games were scored [illegible] The fastest to back check when Acton Juniors lost a tough one to Georgetown 2 [illegible] home on Friday night.

A quiet pre-Christmas wedding of interest to many Acton friends was solemnized on Friday afternoon at Baptist parsonage, Georgetown, when Laura Audrey daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Albert McMullen became the bride of Mr. Ivan Morris Kirkness, youngest son of Mr. and the late Mrs. Peter Kirkness. Rev. F. G. Baxter officiated. Following the ceremony the wedding party motored to Acton where a buffet luncheon was served at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Charles Kirkness.

None could have wished for better weather for the Christmas holidays but Tuesday lived up to all the traditions for a real old-fashioned winter blizzard.

Postmaster Matthews and his staff handled a record amount of Christmas mail this year but it was well cleared away before Christmas Day. Between 27,000 and 28,000 cards were stamped by hand in the Acton Post Office from December 17 to 24.

Monday was nomination day in a number of the townships in [illegible] districts adjoining Acton and there was keen interest manifest in municipal affairs. In Nassagaweya township Reeve George Gordon was acclaimed reeve for a third term. Reeve N. A. Robinson will continue as reeve in Esquesing township.

BACK IN 1908

Taken from the issue of the Free Press, Thursday, Dec. 24, 1908

The president and members of the Acton Aquatic Club have issued invitations for a dinner and [illegible] of the club [illegible] by Mr. A. O. Beardmore on Wednesday evening, January 6th at 7 [illegible] It promises to be [illegible] enjoyable [illegible]

[illegible] has set the [illegible] him [illegible] prompt tude [illegible]

[illegible] The Disciples [illegible] the [illegible] by [illegible] Monday next.

Next Sunday will be Rev. Mr. Wilson's last in his capacity as rector of Acton and Rockwood. He will preach his farewell sermon at St. Alban's on Sunday morning. During his three years as rector, $1,[illegible] has been expended in renovating St. Alban's church, renewing the exterior, putting in a new furnace and new seating for the choir.

Mr. R. G. Brown has already attracted a large trade back to the Acton Chopping Mill. He is exerting himself to please the farmers and to do expeditious work. One of Gray's new improved flake rollers has been installed for rolling oats for feed. The new flume has been completed and will be connected with the mill machinery this week.

Christmas tomorrow! Our merchants have dressed most creditably in making Christmas bright. Be Santa Claus to your poorer neighbor tonight.

At the meeting of the council on Monday night the statement of receipts and expenditures for the year up to December 15 was presented by the treasurer. It shows total receipts of $14,523.77 and payments of $13,031.59, leaving a balance of $1,492.18. This appears to be a very satisfactory statement. The balance on hand a year ago was $711.22.

The annual meeting of the Methodist church's Sunday school was held at Moseycroft on Monday evening. Encouraging reports of the past year were given by H. P. Moore, superintendent, W. H. Speight, secretary and H. S. Nickle, treasurer. The average attendance this year has been 166. The offerings for school purposes was $120.30 and for missions $142.

Jim's Jottings

● EVERYBODY loves getting mail it seems and those Christmas cards are certainly a fine idea. Mind you, it's sometimes difficult getting them off but each one that comes in seems to have a little different message that so often re-establishes a friendship with those we meet and lose touch with over the years. Had one from a chap I went to school with eight years ago and who now lives in California. He religiously refuses to note his address and I just can't seem to get in touch with him. That's one of the problems with friends who move around but his card is most welcome.

● DECORATING the Christmas tree is always one of the signs that heralds the fast approaching holiday season. Its brightness seems to add some magic spell to the atmosphere of a home. Just so there isn't too much spill, though, this year we decided to decorate our Christmas tree with paper decorations and omit the lights. Last year two small boys managed to spill it once or twice, so this year caution has got the best of us. The lights are outside where they aren't quite so accessible.

● SNOW ALWAYS seems to be necessary to spread the contagious Christmas atmosphere and this year the weather man has been extremely co-operative. It arrived with December and except for the occasional mild spell, it has stayed right through. There's something about a white Christmas, though, isn't there?

● SURELY one of Christmas's biggest problems must be choosing the right gifts. It doesn't seem to matter whether you're in cahoots with Santa Claus or not. You always want to choose something different yet practical and yet without too at Christmas, I know what a lot I'd be in. It really wouldn't be much fun, though, if there wasn't some challenge to the choosing.

● YES CHRISTMAS is a thousand things. Again this year it will be celebrated and observed in many different ways by different races of different color, in different climes and in different tongues. The significance of the Nativity Story after more than nineteen hundred years is just as vital and just as relative today as it was on the first Christmas morn. In the final essence, it is the expression of the most fervent hope that dwells in the hearts of men today, that the nations of the world will somehow, someday, achieve a real and lasting degree of Peace on Earth and that individuals the world over will acquire the courage to extend a fuller measure of Good Will toward their fellow man.