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Stories of the Carols
Prepared by
Professor Peter W. Dykema
(Columbia University,
New York City)

Christmas carols is a term used to describe a large variety of songs which are to be used during the Christmas season. They are of two main types—the religious and the convivial: the one celebrating the birth of Jesus, the other exalting mirth and feasting. Only lately has much attention been given to this material by serious musicians. During the 18th century the carol literature was of the humblest kind. Such material as was available was handed on by tradition. Many of the older ones have undoubtedly been entirely lost and many that we now hear have been considerably modernized.

Probably no carol is so universally known, loved and sung as this simple German song. For years its origin was unknown, but supposed to date back centuries. A few years ago Ludwig Erk investigated and found that it was produced in 1818. The poem was written by Joseph Mohr, at the time assistant priest in Oberndorf in South Germany; the melody was composed by Franz Gruber, a school master. On Christmas Eve of that year it was sung in the church at Oberndorf. The poet, who had a tenor voice, sang the melody, the composer, a bass, sang a second part, and a hastily recruited choir of young women, the refrain. A guitar furnished the accompaniment, the organ being out of order. Twenty years or so later a family of strolling singers from the Tyrol added it to their repertoire, and in 1840 it was printed in Leipzig, as a "Genuine Tyrolean" song. For many years (and still in certain song books) the composer of the song was given as Joseph Haydn, probably meaning the great Franz Joseph Haydn. "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

Year after year as the quiet clear nights of the Christmas season approach, the spirits of thousands who have a touch of poetry or imagination in them are stirred at the contemplation of the New Testament story of the birth of Jesus. What countless poems have been produced by writers, great and small. One of the finest expressions is by an American, Edmund H. Sears, a Unitarian minister and a poet, who lived in Massachusetts from 1810 to 1876. In December 1849 he published in a religious journal the poem beginning "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear." He sent it to a brother clergyman who fitted it to an old hymn tune, to which it is still often sung at Wellesley college. The next year, however, an American composer, Richard S. Willis, who had been struck with the unusual beauty of the poem, wrote an original setting for it. This met with such favor that it is practically the only one now in general use. It, moreover, has, because of its Christmas spirit, appropriately been given the hymn-tune name "Carol."

"O Little Town of Bethlehem" One of the finest Christmas carols of the less traditional group is "O Little Town of Bethlehem" by Phillips Brooks, the beloved Boston divine. (1835-1898.) This was written for Sunday school singing when the composer was bishop of the Episcopal diocese of Massachusetts. He first sent it out anonymously, but as the hymn gained favor the authorship became known. The words of this carol well portray the spirit of simplicity and tranquility of Bethlehem and of its inhabitants who so little suspected that a King was in their midst. Although written especially as a Christmas song, it is of such a nature that it is often used on other occasions. Book of Christmas—Introduction by Hamilton W. Mabie. Carols Old and Carols New, by Hutchins. Christmas, by Robert Haven Schaufner. Christmas Treasury of Song and Verse, by Temple Scott. Story of Christmas, R. J. Campbell.

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Woman's Club Assists in Plans for Children's Christmas Party Dec. 23

The Social Service department of the Highland Park Woman's club is assisting with the Community Christmas party to be given in Highland Park on December 23. They will provide the fruit and candy for the 400 children who have been invited to be guests on this occasion. The club has given the use of its building for this party.

Anyone wishing to make contributions of fruit or candy is asked to get in touch with Mrs. Francis W. Parker Jr., chairman of the Social Service department of the club. Employment has recently been given to several women, through this department, in the dressing of dolls, 25 of which have been dressed and will be distributed for Christmas.

The Philanthropy dance given at the club the end of November netted the Social Service department \$110. This amount goes towards the support of the many philanthropic projects assisted by the club. Anyone needing day help of any kind, or assistance for the Christmas celebration may get in touch with capable people by calling Mrs. Bigley, H. P. 2427.

Philatelic Society Has Christmas Party

The North Suburban Philatelic society held a meeting at the Elm Place school last Monday night, much to the delight of 71 junior collectors who were the recipients of a packet of stamps which were hung on a pretty Christmas tree. The adult collectors got quite a kick out of the youngsters during the auction, especially at the penny raises on bids. The Farley Follies, 16 blocks, mint, went under the hammer at \$47.50. Other old United States stamps brought fairly good prices. Most of the youngsters who were present brought their albums along and got sage advice as to arrangement of their stamps from the older members. It was surprising to see the number of girls that were in attendance, it is evident that girls are becoming as interested in this hobby as are the boys.

Garden Class Holds Annual Christmas Party

Mrs. Lucius Hine entertained members of the Community Garden club of the Highland Park Woman's club at her home on Wednesday, December 11, the occasion of the organization's annual Christmas party. Mrs. Marvin Wallach is social chairman of the club.

Mrs. E. H. Harvey and Mrs. Wallen were in charge of the decorations, which carries out the Christmas motif. The freshman "Eight" orchestra from Deerfield-Shields high school, led by Miss Jeanette Bryant, played Christmas carols. "O Thou Joyful Day," "Christmas Tree" and "Silent Night" were sung in German by Mrs. Wade McNutt, Mrs. William Hoermann and Mrs. Charles Sanborn. Mrs. Richard Mancell, Mrs. E. R. Phelps and Mrs. J. H. Briggs were in charge of refreshments.

Mrs. Mary Mercer Dies— Widow of Lumberman

Mrs. Mary Mercer of Deerfield, the widow of Fielding Mercer, at one time a prominent lumberman in Chicago, died Wednesday morning in the Highland Park hospital. Mrs. Mercer, who was 75 years old, had been ill since Thanksgiving. She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. J. L. Butterfield, with whom she made her home, and two sons, Frank C. Mercer and Joseph D. Mercer, who is president of the Mercer Lumber company in Evanston. Funeral services will be held Friday at 3 p.m. at the Memorial Park cemetery chapel.

Highland Park Is Second in North Shore Building

With a building total of \$97,738 for the month of November, Highland Park was second in a group of eight North Shore towns. November's total showed a gain of almost \$90,000 over November of last year, and a gain of approximately \$12,000 over October of 1935. A tabulation of the eight towns included in the survey, which is made monthly by the Straus Securities corporation, is given below.

Town	Nov. '34	Nov. '35
Lake Forest	\$188,982	\$453,000
Highland Park	97,738	2,475
Glencoe	61,704	39,800
Evanston	56,750	11,750
Winnetka	49,125	16,400
Wilmette	45,975	7,450
Kenilworth	45,700	none
Waukegan	45,802	15,925

Deerfield Legion to Hold Amateur Talent Contest

Amateur talent is offered an opportunity to display itself at the Deerfield Post "amateur night" to be held in January. Young and old who can sing, play, dance or recite are invited to participate in this one big night of fun put on by Deerfield Post.

Applications should be sent to Wm. Tennerman of Deerfield or to Gus Klemp, 17 North Second St., Highland Park, before Dec. 24th. Besides the fun of taking part in a show of this kind, prizes are promised to those who win the most applause and the "gong" has been purposely omitted from the program. So come an dregister early for tryouts, you amateurs — you may win a prize!

H. P. Business Men's Gym Classes Postponed

Due to the fact that the high school gym will not be available during Christmas holidays, the regular Monday night games in the Business Men's Basketball League will be postponed for two weeks. The next night of play will be Monday, Jan. 6. At the next session Bock's Service Station five will meet Fell's Clothiers, Deerfield will play the Young Men's Club, and Jordan's will play the Tigers. In the games last Monday night, Bock's team defeated the Young Men's Club; Deerfield won over the Jordan Flashes, and the Tigers forfeited to Fell's. The games are open to the public.

Children's Costume Party to Be Held at Y.W.C.A.

Children of members of the Mother's Club of the YWCA are invited to their annual Christmas party to be held this year at the "Y" on Friday, Dec. 2, from 2 to 4 p.m. This year's party is a costume party with a grand march opening the program and prizes awarded by judges for the cleverest dressed child. An afternoon of surprise, including a visit from Santa Claus, is being planned by the committee, Mrs. Coza St. John, Mrs. John Barber, and Mrs. E. E. Paulsen. Over one hundred children, all under twelve years of age, are expected. The Goeltz Confectionary company is repeating their annual gift of candy for all. Each child is asked to bring a small gift to add to Santa's pack.

Academy Luncheon to Be Held Friday

Lake Forest Academy's annual holiday luncheon will be held this year on Friday noon, December 27, at the Union League Club of Chicago. With invitations mailed to nearly 100 alumni and patrons living in the Chicago area, indications are that a record crowd will attend this annual holiday affair. Paul G. Hoffman of South Bend, Ind., president of the Studebaker Corporation of America, will be the guest speaker. Mr. Hoffman's sons, Hallock and Peter, are students at the Academy this year. Also included on the brief program will be Headmaster John Wayne Richards, Senior Master Edmund J. Rendtorff, and Ernest Palmer '03, director of the Department of Insurance of the State of Illinois; Edward C. Hoelscher '26, Chicago insurance broker, will serve as toastmaster.

Carioca Dinner Dance Planned for January 3

Tricks of magic by mysterious local magicians and special dancing numbers will be the feature of the Carioca Dinner Dance planned for January 3.

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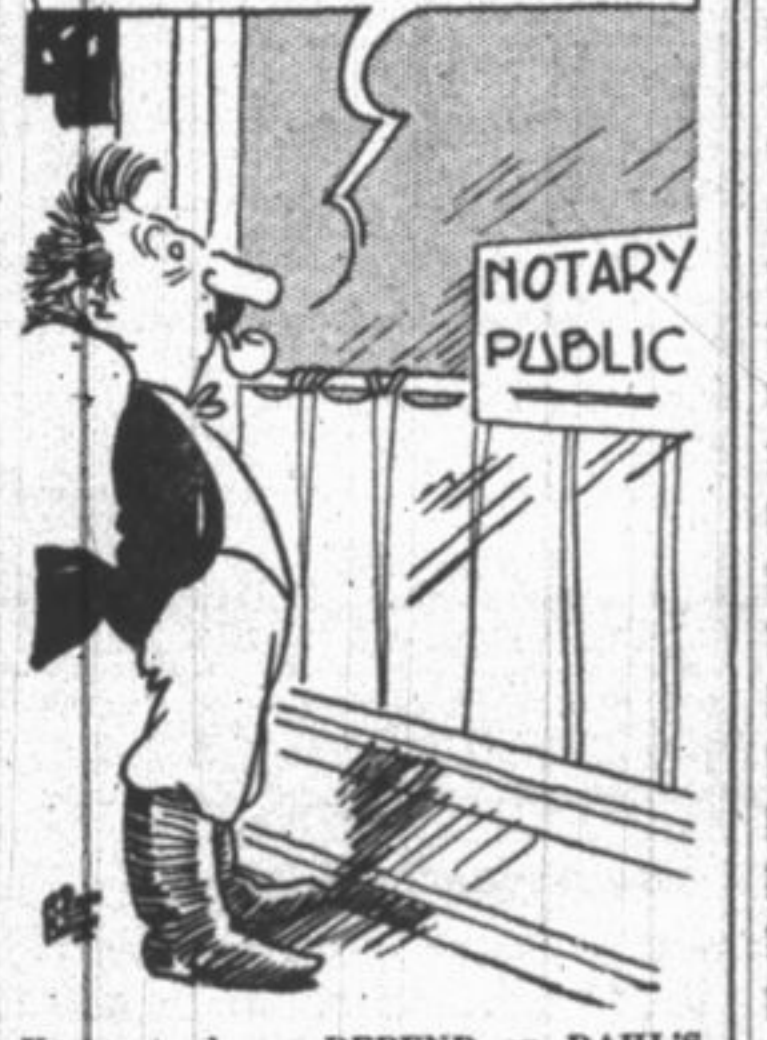
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