MY MOST MEMORABLE CHRISTMAS

At Christmas time, the hearts of Christian folk go out to all the world, especially to those less fortunate than they. These true stories written by Piney Woods students show what Christ means to the colored folk whom your gifts here helped to educate. Their tender hearts are touched by your kindness. Your heart, I am sure, will respond to their joys and their sorrows. Their assignment was to write of their most memorable Christmas, whether it be sad or joyful.

Spirits of Christmas

Settling in the United States from the four quarters of the globe, our ancestors brought with them the Christmas traditions of their native lands—customs which have become a part of the Christmas observance in various parts of our country today.

Running through all of them is the meaning of the birth of our Savior. Singing of the old familiar carols, trimming the Christmas tree, exchanging gifts with loved ones, attending Christmas programs and religious services, and re-echoing the words, "PEACE ON EARTH, GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN"—these are a part of our Christmas celebrations.

This year, to give a little variety, the students of Piney Woods School were asked about some particular things that made a great impression on them at Christmas time. You may see some interesting and touching stories in this issue of the Christmas Torch.

Christ With a Family of Nine

In a Two-Room House

Once not so very long ago, there was a family of nine living in a two-room house. They were unfortunate to have an unhappy Christmas. The reason they didn’t have a Christmas is that they had no money to buy presents. That was because their home had been burned a week before Christmas.

The big family of people couldn’t keep a fairable in a two-room house. They didn’t have the proper clothes for the snowy weather. They didn’t have any food for Christmas; such as, cakes, pies, and different other fancy foods. The children didn’t have any toys because Santa Claus was unable to come to them like he had been coming for the past few years. That year Christmas was awful with that family; because they didn’t get a chance to attend church like the rest of their neighbors. Even they missed singing Christmas carols with the church members. Their children were unable to participate with the other children at school in their Christmas plays. Yet the family didn’t have a chance to pray, and sing Christmas carols in the home. All different people in my community gave them some of their clothing for the snowy weather, and some pies and cakes of what they had to spare to try to make the big family happy.

BERDIE MAE LUCKETT

Memories

Massachusetts

September 26, 1953

Prof. Laurence C. Jones

Piney Woods, Mississippi

Dear Sir,

An enclosing check for this amount is enclosed to express my appreciation for the wonderful work you have done over the forty years. Through the recollection of you that sticks by me is your declamations of Shakespeare at drill time under old Col. Brunette. I believe in the old armory at Iowa University.

Sincerely,

JOHN SCHERER

The Story of Christmas Time

But one year, our mother and father surprised us. They had us working hard until Christmas, and Santa did not bring us anything but one apple and one stick of candy and all five of the children cried all day Christmas. It was all we folks could afford.

GEORGIA R. NICHOLS

10th Grade

Christmas In My State of Mexico

When I was a little girl, I used to go to church one Sunday some poor little girls and boys were crying and I gave them some money, I told them to come with me. We went to the church and the priest gave them the presents and I gave the little girls some of my dresses and shoes and they were very happy. That made me happy too.

CLAUDINA PLATAS

7th Grade

Christmas at Piney Woods

Christmas at Piney Woods is somewhat different from elsewhere. Down here, all the students get the same Christmas Spirit. What I mean is that all the students are happy. There is no one any more than the other. On Christmas Eve night we assemble in the chapel. We sing carols and tell stories. When the singing is over, the smaller children are impressed by Santa Claus. One of the students pretends to be Santa to make them happy. He passes out gifts to everyone. Everyone is happy, but the smaller ones are even happier.

I know now that Christmas time is a time when there is happiness: I have grown out of that stage, so it’s not like it used to be with me. When I was smaller, I could hardly wait until Christmas came. And when I did, sleeping was hard on Christmas Eve night. I wanted to see what Santa Claus brought. We got almost what we wanted so we had no reason to be unhappy at Christmas. As a secondary one boy which was our good friend didn’t get too much of anything. His mother was dead and his father didn’t care too much about getting anything. When I said I was going to get something for Christmas, he said he was going to think about it. When I got older, I found out why. Now I think about how much I was blessed. I didn’t get everything I wanted but it was enough to keep me satisfied.

WILLIAM THOMAS SHEED

11th Grade

AN AUTOMOBILE

Perhaps someone has a car in fair condition, for various reasons surely can’t use it. In that case it would rather see a place like Piney Woods School put it to good use. We’ll be happy to come for it.

OTIS HOWELL

GREETINGS OF THE SEASON

Christmas In the Heart

Ada Mae Hoffrek

Around this time of season comes Enchantment in the air, Hard to define it, but one feels its presence everywhere.

A magic wand with heavenly touch
Has floated down to earth,
To fill the hearts of young and old
With peace, good will and mirth.

They smile and laugh, who ne’er before
Showed happiness within
There’s some bewitchery that tends
To make the whole world kin.

Oh, that this charm could make its home
Within our hearts always—
To keep the world that kindly touch
We feel on Christmas Day!

Christmas and Family Pray

Christmas at my home was always a family affair because at early age, when I was five years old, we all were at home and still we all were happy. When we arose from our bed on Christmas morn- ing, we all had a family prayer but still I did not know what I meant about Christmas. We had a big dinner that day, and after I ate dinner I asked my mother what it meant about Christmas and she told me the story about the birth of Christ.

PICTURE STORY

If you did not receive last month a 40th Anniversary Pic- torial History of the early and present-day Piney Woods School or if you want another one or more please feel free to write us. Piney Woods School, Piney Woods, Mississippi.