

Christmas!

by Mrs. Leonard Warren

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Christmas! The most wonderful and joyous holiday of all. But the way that the majority of all people go about it, it seems to be become more and more of a hectic hassle each year, and most people are proud when it's over.

As I recall the memories of my childhood Christmasses were simple (do it yourself) and very exciting.

Oh, what fun it was to go into the woods and look until we found just the right tree to decorate for Christmas, to pick holly berries and gather mistletoe. We strung the holly berries and popcorn and crepe paper to decorate our tree. We never heard of store bought trees and trimming in those days. We never had beautiful boxes wrapped in lovely paper and colorful ribbons under our tree. In fact we had no gifts under the tree at all. These were saved to put in our stockings, which we hung on the mantle, right where Santa could easily find them.

I can well remember how busy my mother would be the week before Christmas. She baked several cakes, (cause it was a bunch of us kids). She made them from scratch (so to speak). One I especially remember had cooked dried apples between each layer. (It was truly mouth watering.) And those mince meat and apple pan pies were fit for a king. We didn't have cake and pie too often, so I guess this made them especially good.

Our parents did very little Christmas shopping, and for a very good reason (they didn't have the money). On Christmas Eve they would hitch the horse to the buggy and do to a little country store for Santa Clause. This consisted of a paper pack of candy (real hard), oranges, apples and maybe a box of raisins or a few English walnuts.

Those Christmas Eve nights were the longest and most restless nights I ever spent. We went to bed with all our clothes on, (except our shoes) and they were near the bed, so we could pull them on in a jiffy.

On Christmas morning nobody called us; before day light we were awake and all six of us came down those stair steps at once. The boys usually got a knife and maybe a bag of marbles, plus an apple, orange and candy. The girls got a little doll with a China head, arms and legs - and a straw stuffed body. That was the prettiest doll I ever saw. And that was the best apple (core and all) I ever ate! We ate most all we got before breakfast. Each one was afraid someone else would get his. So we ate all we could.

Simple? You bet it was. But that's the way it was in the good old days, when people were happy and easily pleased. There are times to remember and times to forget, but in my book those are "remembering" years.

And, as I watch the way people do today (getting ready for Christmas) it makes me sorta proud that I grew up in a time when people didn't have and want everything. I suppose that's why a feeling of nostalgia comes over me as I recall the happiest Christmasses I've ever known.

May God's richest blessings abide with each of you through-out the Holiday Season and the New Year.