

Flood Of 1913 Recounted

(Continued from page seven)
material was No. 14 paired wire which would give service under water.

Ethias Thought Lost
One evening the entire outfit was thrown into deep sorrow for a few hours. W. M. Ethias, Plant man at Eagle Lake, had gone out in a boat on the Colorado River and had not returned. Lost, without a doubt, swallowed up by that muddy, swift current - hopeless task to look for the body. It surely was bad. Bill was a real fellow; had a family, and had been with the Telephone Company for a long time. But late that night Bill turned up, having just got caught in a swift current and washed down a short distance and finally got out and didn't even turn the boat over. Needless to say, there was a jolly time at the corner saloon after that because overtaken nerves had to be stimulated.

We strung No. 14 paired wire on tree limbs sticking out of the water that proved to be enormous trees after the water subsided which was several weeks so doing. At our little settlement, mostly negroes, we slept on what we could and ate corn bread and fresh pork cooked by an old negro woman, the pork being given by a deputy sheriff who organized a band of men and went out and killed hogs wherever they found them and gave the meat away to people who had lost everything in the flood waters and did not have food.

At one place we slept in a bin in a barn that had a wagon load of cotton in it. Well, we were tired and it surely did feel good at night, but when we woke up in the morning, cotton and cotton seed all over, it was very disagreeable. However, after a day on the river it was welcome again. Our mode of travel was walking, by boat, wagons, or work trains. There was no automobiles then.

Almost Stranded
An incident that occurred about four miles west of Eagle Lake that year was as follows. H. Buford and I had rowed across about one-fourth mile of water and strung out paired wire to restore service across that stretch where 10 or 12 poles and wire were gone. When we landed was a strip of land higher and the water was not over it. It was probably a mile to where the lead was washed away again but that entire strip of land was surrounded by water, making this a complete island of several hundred acres. We did not know there was anyone on it and were two or

Merry Christmas!



**Colorado County
FARM BUREAU**
Columbus, Texas

Christmas Thoughts By ELPS Third Graders

Here are some short stories on the Christmas Season by Mrs. Gladis Shewhart's third graders at Eagle Lake Primary School.

One night it was Christmas and we were at Mema's house. We received all good presents. After a long time, Santa Claus came to Mema's house. He wore red and white and he had a long white beard and a mustache. He had rosy cheeks and a cherry nose. Santa Claus had a big load of toys on his back when he came in the door. Then he gave Stacy and me presents. After this he left and we went home. When we got home, our stockings were full of toys and candy. What a Christmas! Stephanie Causey.

One night as Nancy and Tracy were in the family

three hundred yards from the boat when we heard a noise and found a man, his wife, and baby, loaded in our boat leaving the shore. We managed to stop them. These people were so scared and hungry I am sure they would have been carried away by the current and we would have been left stranded. We transported them across and obtained the services of a farmer and wagon and carried them to Eagle Lake.

We continued restoring telephone lines but did not finish that day. Later in the day I had the misfortune to get caught in a swift current when in the boat by myself and was lucky enough to catch one lone piling left of a bridge that had been swept away. Had I missed that piling - well, I didn't, but no boat or man could have ridden that water 20 feet below that piling. About 100 feet up stream from me was a portion of railroad bridge on which a railroad man was standing. I never knew his name but he was stranded, too. This man tried catching floating timber and tying them on a wire and floating them to me. When a chunk came within 20 or 30 feet of me the current would pull it under, and my piling was all the time swaying like it was going over too. After about two hours he succeeded in getting me a line and pulled me to him, then we both got in the boat. Well, I thought that current had us both but the Railroad Company and Telephone Company won for we got out and the railway track was rebuilt in the spring. The telephone line was restored to temporary service the next day.

room, their mother said, "Don't you think it is time for bed? You know Santa Claus will be here soon." Then the girls ran upstairs. Mother

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Season's Greetings



**May your Christmas be wreathed with
good times, good fortune and good cheer.**

WINTERMANN & COMPANY

Eagle Lake, Texas

said, "I will leave some coals and cake on the table." After a while Santa Claus had come and drank the coals. Then a voice said, "Ho! Ho! Ho! Merry Christmas." They had a lot of gifts. Then the girls jumped out of bed and ran downstairs. They opened their presents. They also ate cake and drank the coals. They had a lot of fun. Cecily Hurd.

Good Deeds

At USO centers, servicemen away from home will find many holiday activities to lessen their loneliness. Special dances are held during the holidays, with young women volunteering as hostesses, and Christmas Day dinners are prepared for the servicemen by volunteers from various organizations. Many families will, through the USO, invite a

serviceman to enjoy Christmas dinner with them in their homes.

Senior citizens also receive special attention at this time, with many inviting those without families into their homes for holiday celebrations. Special Christmas programs are presented at senior citizen centers everywhere for the enjoyment of our older men and women.

And, countless unfortunate individuals and families are made happier during the holidays, thanks to contributions made by the more fortunate to community organizations.

Christmas Legend

There is a beautiful legend about the Helleborus, or Christmas rose. The legend tells of a little girl who wept outside the stable

at Bethlehem, because she had no gift to offer the newborn Babe. An angel brushed the earth where her tears fell with a wing and lo! a plant at the child's feet began to bloom, blossoming into lovely, white flowers. The little girl eagerly plucked the flowers and took them to the manger. As they brushed the infant's tiny foot, the petals flushed a soft pink.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Make It A Safe Christmas!

Stockings should be hung by the chimney with care, in the hope that Saint Nick will soon be there - and with some thought to Christmas safety.

"Christmas trees, lights, candles, mantel trimmings, your fireplace and even excess wrapping paper can be a source for holiday accidents," according to Harold Ray, Director of the Product Safety Division of the Texas Department of Health.

In selecting a natural tree, Ray suggests getting one with a good green color. The needles of a fresh tree should be hard to pull from the branches, and they shouldn't break when bent. "Bounce the tree hard against the ground and you won't get a shower of needles if the tree is fresh," he says.

Christmas trees should be placed in a base which holds water, and this should be checked regularly. Before mounting the tree, cut about two inches off the trunk to allow it to better absorb the water.

Trees should be kept away from stoves, fireplaces and radiators which could cause them to dry out quickly and perhaps catch fire.

In selecting lights, check for the Underwriters' Laboratories' "UL" label. On strings of lights, make certain all the connections are tight and that there are no frayed or bare wires. These could cause short circuits and perhaps a fire.

Outdoor lights should be waterproof. They are especially made for the outdoors.

Lit candles should never be used on a Christmas tree or



in an arrangement bringing them close to a wreath, ribbons or other materials that can easily catch fire. "Candles shouldn't be used on surfaces that are within the reach of small children, say, by a slight tug on the tablecloth, warns Ray.

When away from home, or when you go to bed, turn off all the Christmas lights. And, never use ordinary Christmas lights on a metal tree, because they increase the danger of a shock.

If you have little children who pop things in their mouths, avoid trimming the tree with small or shiny ornaments like tinsel, icicles or tiny lights that may look good enough to eat.

"Tinsel is now supposed to be free of lead, but old stock may still be available in some stores," Ray said. "Buy only boxes labeled non-toxic."

When disposing of their trees, many people burn the trimmings from their branches in the fireplace. If burned a piece at a time, this shouldn't cause any problem. But piling up a big mound of branches could cause popping and crackling and a large number of sparks.

"So be careful, and always use a screen before the fireplace," Ray said. "Don't hang decorations of tinsel, Christmas cards or tree branches from the mantel where they could become ignited."

Always make sure the damper is open before lighting a fire and have the flue checked periodically to be sure it's free of accumulations of tar. Adequate ventilation is important to prevent the build-up of carbon monoxide from home fires.

"And once those presents under the tree are opened, gather up all the wrappings from the tree and fireplace area and remove them from the home," Ray says.

Many colored gift wrapping papers contain large amounts of lead and sometimes

chromium, copper and zinc that can be harmful to children who chew or swallow them. These papers can also cause toxic fumes if burned in the

fireplace. Some traditional Christmas plants shouldn't be kept in homes with very small children. Mistletoe, holly berries,

Jerusalem cherry, amaryllis and poinsettias can cause severe gastrointestinal illness, and even death, if ingested. "Creativity is at its finest at

Christmas time as homes are made beautiful both within and without," says Ray. "But planning for safety should also be part of the holiday season."

Cristes Maesse
The word Christmas is actually a combination of two words; *Cristes* Maesse, or the mass of Christ.

GREETINGS



A Christmas that sparkles and glistens . . . a Christmas where every child's wish comes true . . . a fairy-tale Christmas . . . that's our wish for you!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

ASHBY OIL COMPANY

Eagle Lake, Texas

Free Christmas Gifts Offered At Many Firms

There's still a few days left in which to visit local business firms and register without obligation for many valuable prizes to be awarded at the conclusion of the pre-Christmas holiday shopping.

You may register at any of the following stores for these gifts, without obligation:

Wilcox Minimex

Registrations are being taken at the Wilcox Minimex for four valuable prizes to be awarded on Dec. 24th. Included are: a Westinghouse Microwave Oven, a Little Tikes Railroad, a Christmas Stacking (the world's largest filled with toys), and a Mickey Mouse Clock.

Rice Drug Store

The Rice Drug will award two eight-foot tall stockings filled with games, toys, dolls, etc. and is taking registrations, without obligation. One of the stockings will be awarded during Santa's visit to the store last Saturday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the other at 3 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 23rd.

Lake Crest Flower Shop

You are invited to register for free gifts to be awarded by the Lake Crest Flower Shop at the corner of McCarty and Union streets as part of their annual Christmas open house which ends Wed., Dec. 24th.

Miller's Grocery

Miller's Grocery is taking registrations for a jackpot drawing in which a total of \$99 in cash prizes will be awarded at 4 p.m. Wed., Dec. 24th. The prizes include: five \$1 prizes; two \$2 prizes; one \$5 prize; one \$10 prize; one \$25 prize; and one \$50 cash prize. Only those 18 and over may register.

Santa Claus will be visiting Miller's Grocery from 1 to 2:30 p.m. on Wed., Christmas Eve.

Jo Ann's Dept. Store

Jo Ann's department store will award a \$100 gift certificate and other valuable merchandise prizes at 11 a.m. on Christmas Eve. Register now at Jo Ann's at 105 N. McCarty without obligation.

Colorado Savings & Loan

Colorado County Federal Savings and Loan Assn. of Columbus will award two valuable prizes on Tues., Dec. 23rd. There will be a prize of a 10 speed bicycle for the children; and a \$500 gift certificate to some lucky mother or father.

Eagle Lake Sewing Center

Eagle Lake Sewing Center is taking registrations for a free sewing basket to be awarded on Christmas Eve, Dec. 24th.

Info On WCJC

Spring Evening Classes Available

Free copies of Spring Semester Evening Classes and enrollment applications for Wharton County Junior College in Wharton are now available from the office of Ersen Haby, registrar.

Registration is scheduled on Monday, January 13 from 7:30 p.m. for night courses which include banking, office skills, data processing, welding, music, law enforcement, real estate, and a number of traditional "university parallel" offerings for degree seekers.

Call (713) 532-4560, extension 34 for additional information or write to the Registrar's Office, Wharton County Junior College, 911 Baling Highway, Wharton, Texas 77660.