

Christmas Eve in Cimarron

The Evening Star on its course across the western sky paused for awhile beside a crescent moon to watch a little New Mexico village on Christmas Eve.

No Broadway or shopping center here with their brilliant lights to make the Christmas season a fairy-land; just little houses with lights in the windows - some of adobe with little brown faces gathered around the supper table - an extra candle lighted before the image of the Virgin Mary. Other little houses with lighted Christmas trees and excited children getting into Sunday clothes for the program at the Community Church, which was soon crowded with children and parents. After a beautiful Christmas pageant Santa Claus appeared and gave each child a bag of candy and nuts topped with a big red apple. At the close of the program all were invited to the ranch home of the Hayward family for an evening of music and games and just "old-fashioned" visiting. At midnight a buffet supper was served from tables loaded with food raised on the ranch and delicious beyond description.

At another ranch home on the Ponil River a tall mountain spruce tree shining with tinsel and candle light touched the ceiling of the lovely old parlor where the family and friends were gathered. A daughter of the household, at home from college, explained to her school friends who had come to spend Christmas at the ranch that in other years Tom Boggs and other well known scouts and frontiersmen were often visitors there. In one corner of the parlor is a little table of native wood which was fashioned by Tom Boggs, and the fine old furniture in this room was freighted over the Santa Fe Trail. At midnight servants bring in refreshments and the merry party continues until "Flicka", Joan's little saddle pony, looks in the window to see what is causing so much laughter.

Soon a bell peals out in the steeple of a little church on the hill calling the people to midnight mass, and the Star remarks to the Moon "I think that we had better be on our way or some star gazer will get excited for we are behind schedule, but it is wonderful to see an old-fashioned Christmas once more."



(The Evening Star, Venus, was observed in this position early in December 1944.)

J. Alpers