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We are here to receive deposits and loan money. We are certain we can use you well. We are always after new business. We ask for yours NOW.

CHRISTMAS IN
CIVIL WAR TIME.

A Veteran Tells About the Box
That Came From Home.

"SEEING all the people buying Christmas things now," said a veteran of the civil war, "makes me think of some Christmas experiences of my own, first of the time when I used to hang up my stockings by the fireplace, sticking forks through them and then jamming the forks into a crack under the mantelpiece, where Santa Claus could get at them handily when he came down the chimney, and then of a time when we were more grown up and Santa Claus came to us in the army.

"The regiment I served in put in a good part of its time in states on the southern Atlantic seaboard, in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, where with water transportation to us we could be got at rather more easily than troops not so far away, but at interior points, and so, while you couldn't have things shipped to you there as you could to this town or the other in times of peace, you could get things there pretty well, and the patron for whom our company was named when it was first recruited used to see to it that at Christmas time there was delivered to us a big box filled with things from friends at home.

"We no longer bore his name in the army, for from the minute we were mustered into the United States service we had become simply Company So-and-so, of such and such a numbered regiment, of such and such state volunteers, but we never forgot our friend at home, and surely he never forgot us, and at Christmas time he used to see that our company got that box.

"Well, in advance he would announce in the home papers that on such and such a date a box would be sent to the company and if friends or relatives of members of the company would bring in the gifts they wished to send they would be carefully packed and duly shipped. And then the people used to bring in the things, and, though somehow I never thought of it then, I have thought often since with what loving care and tenderness must those Christmas gifts have been prepared, those things sent from home to their soldiers in the field!

"When everything was all in our friend would have the things securely and safely packed, and then he'd hike the box down to New York, and there the quartermaster's department would

put it down to us. So Santa Claus wasn't coming to us with his pack on his back, down the chimney, but in a box in the hold of a steamer.

"When we got our first Christmas box we were on an island down the coast there, drilling some and doing guard and picket duty, but largely engaged in building corduroy roads through swamps by day, and by night in hauling by hand, with a whole regiment on the ropes, heavy mortars and guns over these roads, and also, under the same friendly cover of darkness, in building masked batteries in which the said guns and mortars were mounted, all this in the course of besieging a fort occupied by Confederate soldiers on another island.

"It was plenty of hard work and not much play and most of the freight that came to us, besides the usual commissary supplies, was guns and mortars and powder and shot and shell and the various materials of war, but one day there came ashore on a lighter from a transport anchored off, along with barrels of pork and kegs of powder, that Christmas box from home for us soldiers.

"We hauled it up from the beach and set it down carefully, right side up, at the end of the company street, and I doubt if any fireplace on a Christmas morning was ever a greater magnet of attraction to children than that box was to the men of Company X. To a man they gathered around it to see what Santa had brought them from home.

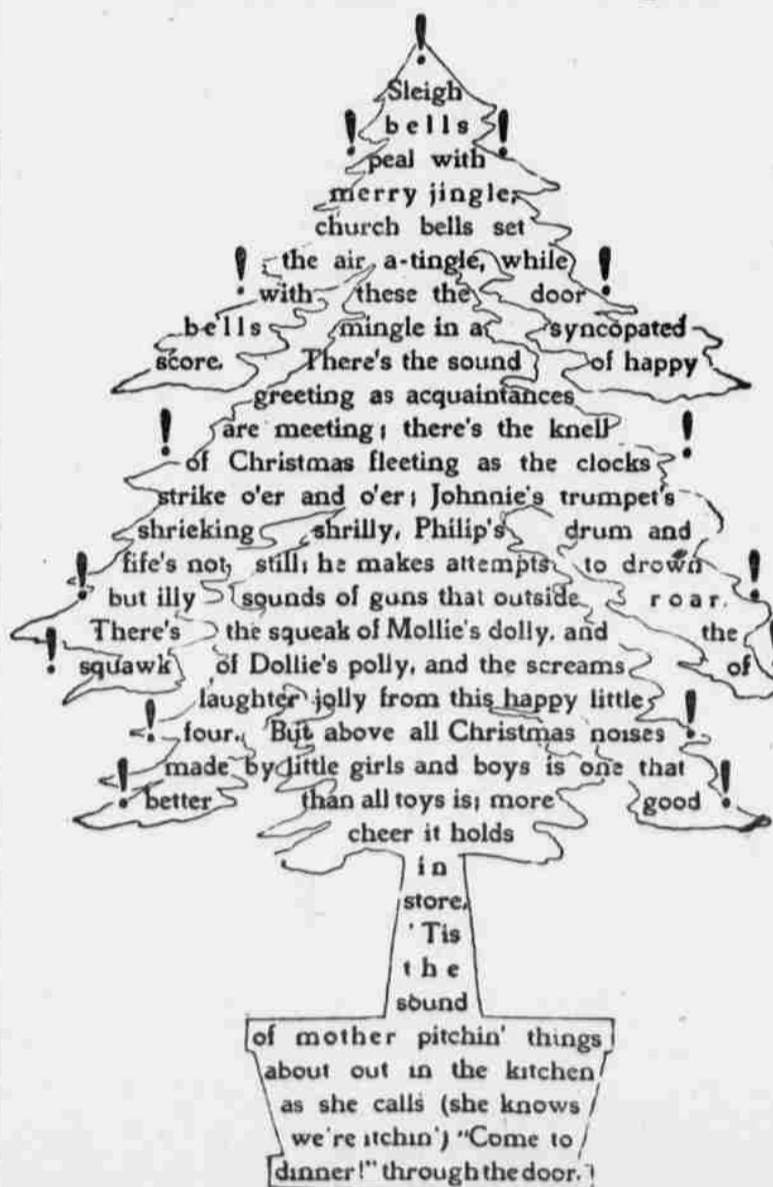
"It was a big box, a big dry goods packing box, big enough to hold something for everybody, and carefully we opened it, and with the lid off it seemed full of innumerable treasures, so full to the last inch of space was it packed.

"The orderly sergeant of the company made the distribution. He raised his hand and reached over and picked up a package that lay at the center of the box and lifted it and read the name on it and passed it into the outstretched hand of the man to whom it belonged.

"Then he went on more rapidly, picking up the things and reading off the names and passing them over, packages of all sorts and shapes and sizes, all eagerly received. Some men stayed to see everything given out, and some went to their tents to see what the folks had sent them or to read the letters that had come with the gifts. And so the things in the box got lower and lower, while still there were some men who had as yet got nothing and who now were more and more anxious. And how joyfully relieved when at last something came up for them!

"But there were a few, a very few, who lingered in vain, who among all these gifts got nothing, and plainly disappointed were some of these, while others took it jauntily—perhaps they had no one to send them, these—but

A Christmas Tree Talk.



still all bore it bravely, and be sure that those who got shared what they could share with those who had nothing in the box.

"What came in the Christmas box? Well, not much bric-a-brac, not many fancy candlesticks nor cardcases nor fancy purses nor that sort of thing, but mostly useful articles, though among these there were watches and pocketknives, and so on, but there were home knit stockings and sewing kits and suspenders and shoes and books, not forgetting Bibles and Testaments, and tobacco and pipes and cigars, all sorts of useful things and many letters and pictures.

"And from whom did all these things come? From wives and from children

and from sisters and sweethearts and mothers, and it was that that made them all so dear. And, bless their dear hearts, they did not forget—they did not at all forget the things to eat. "The box seemed full of roasted chickens and cookies and jellies and sausages and sealed up cans of butter and grand cakes and all manner of good things to eat. True, we had pork enough, and we had plenty of hardtack, but here was something that savored of Christmas.

"Now when I see everybody buying Christmas things and the children and everybody happy it makes me smile and, I confess, choke up a little as I recall that Christmas in the army."

A CHRISTMAS PRAYER.

Lord, for the lonely heart
I pray and pray.
Now for the son of sorrow
Whom this tomorrow
Rejoiceth not, O Lord,
Hear my weak word.

For lives too bitter to be borne,
For the tempted and the torn,
For the prisoner in the cell,
For the shame lip doth not tell,
For the haggard suicide,
Peace, peace, this Christmastide!

Into the desert, trod
By the long sick, O God;
Into the patient gloom
Of that small room
Where lies the child of pain
Of all neglected most, be fain
To enter, healing and remain.

Now at the fall of day
I bow and pray,
For those who cannot sleep
A watch I keep,
Oh, let the starving brain
Be fed and fed again,
At thy behest
The tortured nerves find rest.

I see the vacant chair,
Father of souls, prepare
My poor thoughts feeble power
To plead this hour.

For the empty, aching home,
Where the silent footsteps come,
Where the unseen face looks on,
Where the handclasp is not felt,
Where the dearest eyes are gone,
Where the portrait on the wall
Stirs and struggles as to speak,
Where the light breath from the hah
Calls the color to the cheek,
Where the voice breaks in the hymn
When the sunset burneth dim,
Where the late large tear will start,
Frozen by the broken heart;
Where the lesson is to learn
How to live, to grieve, to yearn,
How to bear and how to bow,
Oh, the Christmas that is fled,
Lord of living and of dead,
Comfort thou!

—Elizabeth Stuart Phelps.

Christmas Once a Year.
Those Christmas bells as sweetly chime
As on the day when first they rung
So merrily in olden time
And far and wide their music rung
Shaking the tall gray ivied tower
With all their deep, melodious power,
They still proclaim to every ear,
"Old Christmas comes but once a year!"

Then he came singing through the woods
And plucked the holly bright and green,
Pulled here and there the ivy buds;
Was sometimes hidden, sometimes seen,
Half buried 'neath the mistletoe,
His long beard hung with flakes of snow,
And still he ever caroled clear,
"Old Christmas comes but once a year!"

What though upon his heavy head
Has fallen many a winter's snow,
His wreath is still as green and red
As 'twas a thousand years ago,
Again we're happy all day long,
We smile and listen to the song,
Its burden still remote or near,
"Old Christmas comes but once a year!"
—Joiaquin Miller.

Among the Wise Sayings.
If Christmas came more than once
a year, say four times, the sheriff
also would call around about that of
ten. Yes?

GETTING MISTLETOE
FROM OKLAHOMA

How the Kissing Plant Is
Gathered and Marketed.

DOUBTLESS many people purchasing their Yuletide rations have often wondered whence come the immense supplies of mistletoe which must be required to fill the great demand for it during holiday season in the cities and of those states too far north for parasitic growth to thrive, says Sherman in Country Life in America. Among many of the people native to the states north of Kansas and south who have never taken the trouble to look the matter up a sort of general idea prevails that mistletoe is found only at rare intervals, and diligent search, and then on oak with only a few sprigs growing in place.

The traveler visiting Oklahoma capital of the new state of Oklahoma during the winter time and, talk walk out to Wheeler park, which is situated in the southwest part of town, will have this idea quickly dispelled from his mind, for at a considerable distance from the town his attention will be drawn to a strange appearance which the present at that season of the year when the leaves are off and the tree thrives on every branch.

In the summer time, when the are on the trees, the mistletoe is seen unless it is specially for, and then it appears to be a part of the natural foliage of the upon which it is growing.

Contrary to general belief, mistletoe is rarely found on oak trees in Oklahoma; it is nearly always found on swamp or water elms, which are usually seen growing in lowland along river banks. Here it thrives abundantly.

There is but one species of mistletoe found in Oklahoma out of the 40 species known to exist, most of which are found in tropical countries and parasitic in nature.

In Oklahoma two or three weeks before Christmas the annual mistletoe harvest is gathered—generally by who don't mind the dangerous risky job of climbing into all the trees after it—and brought to where it is packed in barrels and shipped to the northern cities and towns, where, along with the holly, it finds a place in happy homes which have not forgotten the good old custom of decorating their homes with the glad Christmas tree.