

The Daffidillio Dispatch

O TANNENBOMB?

By T. Tootsie

The older nine Racconi children: Thunder, 12; Rose, 11; Max, 10; Susan, 9 1/2; William and Alex, 8; Peter and Edmund, 7; and Lucy, 5; were all sitting in their bedroom around their dinky little Christmas tree, which they had dug out of the backyard. It was snugly planted in an ice cream container, decorated with cow bells and lights that had burnt out ten years earlier. Peter stood beside the Christmas tree, singing his favorite Christmas carol: O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum..." "What does Tannenbomb mean?" asked

William. "It's German for Christmas—" "Bomb!" Max cut in. "Our Christmas tree is a German bomb!" "All the way from World War Two?!" cried Rose. "That must mean our presents are grenades!" said Edmund. "And the Fluf X delivery trucks are really tanks in disguise!" said Lucy. "Does that mean Santa Bear is really evil? Is World War Three upon us?" wailed Thunder. The children were horrified. "We have to get rid of the presents, or they'll blow up on Christmas Day!" they yelled, stampeding down the stairs.

[[Story continued on page 4]]

1719, in his collection of 'The Psalms of David: Imitated in the language of the New Testament, and applied to the Christian state and worship.' In the late twentieth century, 'Joy to the World' was one of the most frequently published hymns in North America.



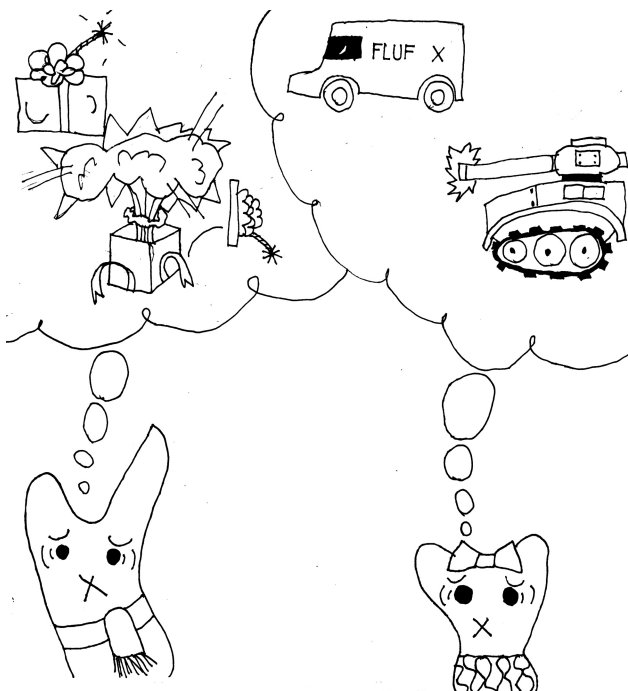
'The Twelve Days Of Christmas' was first published in 1780, inspired by the celebration from December 25th to January 5th, known as the twelve days of Christmas or Twelvetide. Twelvetide was celebrated in many churches during the Middle Ages, and is the theme for Shakspeare's play Twelfth Night. In this carol, someone is receiving a gift from their true love on each of the twelve days. An interesting thing is that when the person is said to receive 'four calling birds' it was originally written as 'four colly birds'. Colly is another word for blackbird. Another tidbit concerning the Twelfth Night is that you would have a feast, where one of the main desserts was 'Twelfth Night cake' or 'King's cake', which is more closely associated with Mardi Gras today.



FUN CHRISTMAS CAROL FACTS

By C. Twining

'Joy to the World' was written by English hymnist Isaac Watts, based on Psalm 96, 98, and Genesis 3. Mr. Watts also wrote many poems. 'Joy to the World' was first published in





'I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day' is the poem 'Christmas Bells', that was written in 1863 by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, after hearing the news that one of his sons, who was fighting in the Union Army, had been severely wounded in a battle during the Mine Run Campaign, from November 26-December 1, 1863. The poem was put to its most widely familiar tune in 1872 by English organist John Baptiste Calkin. In modern recordings, the fourth verse, and sometimes the fifth verse, are left out completely, though they best explain the rest of the poem.



A TREEKY PROBLEM

By C. Twining

Ah, there is so much jollity to the Christmas season! Decking the halls with cones and holly, shooting down mistletoe from the treetops, and seemingly endless amounts of gift wrapping. The club members are boyishly excited for the season, and recently got together with their artist friend B. Hythle, to twist holly and Japanese climbing fern into prickly but beautiful

CHRISTMAS BELLS

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And thought how, as the day
had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till, ringing, singing on its way
The world revolved from night
to day,

A voice, a chime,
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black, accursed
mouth

The cannon thundered in the
South,
And with the sound
The Carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,
And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
'There is no peace on earth,' I
said;

'For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!'

Then pealed the bells more loud
and deep:

'God is not dead; nor doth he
sleep!

The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will
to men!'

wreaths and decor. This eve, however, the club is in no mood for merriment, as they have just remembered that this year they have a new member and comrade; and though all but D. PickleHopper appreciate him greatly, each still have to admit that sometimes R. Cutter is quite mischievous, and that he may indeed pose a

threat to the Christbaum*. "Where in the world are we going to put it?!" Cecil cried in a hushed tone. The club had secretly gathered, as the impending endangerment of the Christmas tree suddenly dawned on them at the dinner table. Chopcrook peered through the doorway of the dining hall. Suddenly, he had an epiphany. "I know! We'll

put it smack-dab in the middle of the table! Just like they did in the Bible!" His fellow members burst out laughing. "What book of the Bible is that in?" Whitney asked. "The Christmas part!" Chopcrook asserted. "You mean the book of Saint Nicholas?" Whitney grinned. The club burst out laughing once more. "Christmas didn't even exist back in the Bible!" Twinkle said with a knowing air. "It didn't?" Chopcrook asked, his countenance falling. "No; because the first Christmas was happening in the Bible at Jesus' birth," Whitney explained. D. PickleHopper, who had been grooming himself quietly in a corner, suddenly burst out irritably, "That is all well and good, but we have still not solved the dilemma of where to put the Christmas tree!" "Wait a minute... I think Chopcrook was onto something," Cecil said thoughtfully. "You see, when the Germans had ceased worship of Thor after the Christian missionary Boniface had cut down their sacred oak, and gave them the fir tree as their new symbol of Christ, they cut down fir trees and hung them upside-down from the beams of their roofs." "Does this mean we have to put a hole in the ceiling?" Twinkle asked worriedly. "No; later they cut down smaller trees and set

them on the parlor table. It was the Americans who moved it from table to floor." "I see! We shall bolt the tree to the table in the dining hall!" cried PickleHopper. As soon as they procured their tree, they set it up to be decorated on the dining hall table. They had to raise the chandelier a few inches to get the tree to fit, but no harm came of it. Everyone was pleased, even R. Cutter, for he still got to gaze at the shining lights!

* [[Note: 'Christbaum' is a German word meaning 'Christ's Tree'.]]



A POODGE LAND CHRISTMAS

By C. Forsyth III

All the Poodgalinians in this family are getting ready for Christmas. The mother of the

children is very pregnant. They think the baby is going to be born on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day. In the picture, you'll see this two-headed bug near the ladder. That's their uninvited guest, that they are happy to have. The first middle girl is carrying a sword to hang on the tree like they always do, and the youngest boy is patting down their floor to keep the Christmas tree intact [[tacked in]]. The mother had just hung her second middle daughter on the tree. The oldest girl is hobbling up the shaking ladder, but she can't reach the top to put the star on. The dad is shaking the ladder so that she'll fall off, as it is a fun traditional game. The mother is having fun kissing her hubby. "Zubzub zub zub, zupppp," said the two-headed bug. In their bug language, this means THE END.



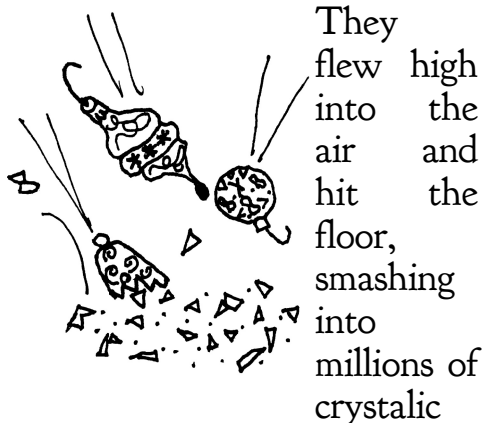
Christmas Day should be fragrant with the love that we bear one another... It is good to be children sometimes, and never better than at Christmas, when its Mighty Founder was a child himself.

— Charles Dickens

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O TANNENBOMB?

continued: As they were rushing through the hall, they ran into the maid, who was carrying some priceless Christmas baubles sent by Catarina's relatives in Russia.



They flew high into the air and hit the floor, smashing into millions of crystalic pieces. The boys slowed and stared in awe at the glorious beauty of the sparkles they left in their wake, and off they dashed to the second floor. Entering the living room where the family's pinecone-laden Christmas tree stood, decorated with the finest imported European ornaments, the children flung open the window and started

chucking the presents out to the cold, snowy ground below. Meanwhile, Catarina and Gipini were having tea and biscuits in the first floor parlor, discussing the never-ceasing problem of hiring and retaining a babysitter. Suddenly, colorful objects seemed to be dropping from the sky. "Presents!" cried Gipini. "Santa Bear must have a hole in his sack!" "Gipini, it's not even Christmas Eve yet. Why would Santa Bear be out?" Catarina said absently, unable to believe what she saw out the window. But Gipini didn't hear her, for he was already outside with arms outstretched, ready to receive the torrent of gifts from above. Back upstairs, as the children threw each present, they heard an explosive POP! "The presents are blowing up!! Take cover!!!" Max yelled. "Under the tree—" William started to suggest, but stopped short as he noticed that with each POP! one of the branches jiggled. They then heard a BOOM! from outside. Catarina heard

it also from below. "What was that?" she wondered aloud, leaning out the window. "Are you all right, Gipini?" "The Fluf X truck just backfired!" he called gleefully. Pandemonium upstairs grew to a fever pitch. Edmund raced to the window. "It was the tank shooting a missile! The Gazpacho has arrived! To the bunker!" he cried. "We don't have a bunker!" Alex yelled. "Well then... into the root cellar amongst the carrots and cabbages!" "What if they blow up too?" "Nothing is safe anymore!" the girls wailed. "Stop being sissies," Max said, rolling his eyes. "But wait... We are sissies..." Susan said, confused. "There are two kinds! Let's go!!" "Where?" "The shed! They'll never find us there!" "Look, Catarina! It's raining Christmas!!!" Gipini sang from outside, making snow angels in the torn gold wrapping paper. Catarina sighed and went out into the cold. This is what she saw: Familiar packages, unwrapped and sprawling;

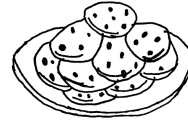
But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.

—Micah 5:2 (NIV)

A very happy husband; Nine small catacoons racing out the back door, covering their heads, dodging unseen missiles, and screaming at the top of their lungs. "What in the world is going on here?!" Catarina hollered. "GERMAN TANNENBOMBS! WORLD WAR THREE IS UPON US! THE TREE IS BLOWING UP!!!" her children cried. Shepherding and spanking her screaming children up the stairs, through the hall (whereupon she noticed the shattered ornaments and gave each an extra smack), and into the living room, she, too, heard the POP! POP! POP!ing of the Christmas tree. "Gipini," she called uneasily, "Why is the tree popping?" "Oh! Those must be the opening pinecones!" said a snow and wrapping-paper speckled Gipini. "That explains the popping," Catarina said. "Now children, can you explain all of this?" she asked as she flung her arm out into the room. All the children

started talking at once. "O Tannenbomb!" "The Christmas tree is a German bomb!" "Fluff X trucks are really tanks!" "Santa Bear is really evil!" "Our presents are grenades, so we had to chuck them out the window!" "Otherwise they will blow up on Christmas Day!" "And we're all gonna die!!!" they sobbed in chorus. "Why, children, all the packages under the tree I wrapped myself! None of them are going to blow up." "They aren't?" sniffled William. "No; they're not," Catarina said consolingly. "But what about the Fluf X tank? It shot a missile," Rose sniffled. "It backfired," Gipini answered helpfully, then grew serious. "Who came up with all this mess, anyway?" They all turned with scowling faces toward Max. He said sheepishly, "I thought 'Tannenbaum' meant 'Christmas bomb'." "It means 'fir tree' or 'Christmas tree' — which I was about to tell you before you cut in!" Peter said hotly. "Well, I suppose it

was all a misunderstanding," Catarina sighed. "Can we have some cookies?" asked Thunder. "I saw Cook baking some earlier." "Yes, please!"



the others said, drying their tears. "That is a fine idea!" said

Catarina. So they all ate some delicious cookies, and promised to never again jump to conclusions.

THE END!

[[Fun (or startling) Fact: The unopened cones on live Christmas trees open up upon feeling heat, and sometimes make a crackling, popping sound as they open.]]



READING TREATS FOR DECEMBER

compiled by C. Twining

Holy Bible: Luke 2:1-20

Read the reason for the season, starring Mary, Joseph, and the Savior of the World! (Psst! They call him Jesus!)

Olive, the Other Reindeer

by Vivian Walsh and J.otto Seiblod

A pup named Olive hears her name in a carol on the radio. Thinking she is really a reindeer, she immediately heads for the North Pole to help Santa. Though this reindeer can't fly, find out how Santa uses Olive in a special way.



Christmas Every Day

by William Dean Howells

A little girl asks her father for a Christmas story; he tells a tale of a little girl who asks a Christmas fairy to make every day Christmas for one year. However, will Christmas every day bring the girl as much joy as expected?



The Gift of the Magi

by O. Henry

It's Christmas Eve, and there is only \$1.87 for Della to buy a

gift for her Jim. This famous O. Henry story of love's sacrifice will warm the hearts of readers just as it did so many years ago.



TO D. PICKLEHOPPER

From the Management

In keeping with the Christmas spirit of 'peace on earth, goodwill toward men', we cannot even consider the removal of Mr. R. Cutter of Claymore until after the New Year. Until then, we recommend that you keep your doors closed, and your things hidden and out of reach, as we have heard that he is quite short. If he be found in the middle of the halls, simply hop over him. At least try to put up with him.

With thanks for your cooperation,

The Management

WISE WORDS FROM THE BEAUTIFUL BUNNY ENCHANTRESS



When the day is overwhelming
And all you do is chew
Be careful who or what
Those teeth may sink into

Take it from the Beautiful Bunny
Enchantress:

This is the time to pray
Asking our dear Lord to take the
fear away

Be patient in the trial, however
long or short
His will is always perfect
So don't hop off course

As you wait do not freeze
Raid your vegetable patch instead
And have a healthy chew
On carrots, celery, apples, lettuce
Kale and blueberries too!

AUDIO RECORDINGS OF THE DISPATCH!

As our Christmas gift to you, The Daffidillio Dispatch brings you our first-ever audio recordings of our issues by acclaimed actress Miss Arabella Strathing, who has performed on Broadway and London's West End, her most recent participations in plays being Chickenburger Strikes Again Again Again Again and Pook: A Modern Twist on A Midsummer Night's Dream. In the New Year of 2022, we will release periodically her unabridged audio recordings of one of our previous issues. Our most recently published issue will also be recorded in the month of its publication. We will notify our subscribers when the audio recording of Issue VIII is released on our website: <https://ronallo.com/daffidilliodispatch> !

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