

# Christmas was hot in the old days

The late Ray Jordan left me a number of short stories he had written and gave me permission to use them. I thought the following one, which he called "Christmas Memories," was appropriate for this time of the year. FWS

## CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

From an "I Remember" column in an old newsprint of 30 years ago come the following recollections:

**Alice Nelson Deierlein** — We had very few presents when I was small. We lived at Clear Lake and mother used to gather hazelnuts in the summertime and keep them for Christmas.

**Mary McRae** — I was raised in Oregon. The first present I remember of was a candy deer and my brother bit its head off.

**Anna McFadden** — Our Christmas presents in the early days consisted mostly of something to wear, with a little candy and nuts.

**Ethel Van Fleet Harris** — I remember a Christmas when I was quite small when father hitched the oxen to a homemade sled and took us to a Christmas tree at the Methodist Church. The Rev. G.L. Cuddy was pastor then.

**Susie Batey Taylor** — In early days it was not possible to buy tree ornaments. Mother used to string popcorn, tie doughnuts and cookies on the tree, often pasting small pictures on the cookies.

I remember the star on top of the tree. Some Indians came in and were awed to see it. They immediately got down on their knees and clasped their hands as in prayer and mumbled something. Mother had us all kneel while she said a little prayer. Then she gave them each something from the tree and they went away.

**Alma Ellingwood** — I remember a Christmas tree in a long hall over the general store at Lowell. Dad got a mustache cup for a left-handed man.

**Josephine Hutchinson Ford** — Once when I was quite small, my folks made me go to a Christmas tree in the Presbyterian Church in Mount Vernon.

**Jessie McCauley Van Lieu** — I was raised at Deming

and I remember the Christmas tree in the schoolhouse there.

**Ruby McRae Taylor** — One Christmas when I was small, we had a family tree — about 75 of us. My cousin was Santa, and his long white hair and whiskers caught fire from one of the candles.

**Mattie Hight Wicker** — I remember a church tree in Centralia. During the hard times of 1893, we got very little for Christmas. Once my mother made me a nightgown of flower sacks and embroidered a design on the front.

We came to Sedro in April, 1894. My father was a mill man and came to install machinery in the Hart-Batey mill.

**Grace Waikle** — We used to have a community Christmas tree in the Jennings schoolhouse. One Christmas my sister got a doll dressed in red silk like my aunt's dress and mine was like the trimming to the dress. Somehow, it shook my faith in Santa.

**Minnie Lederle Batey** — I remember the tree all lit up at the Methodist Church when we used to speak our pieces. I'm sorry the G.L. Cuddy memorial window was broken, for that had been there as long as I could remember.

**Bessie Boyd Bardeau** — We used to attend the Christmas tree celebrations in the old log schoolhouse in Clear Lake.

**Nellie Canavan** — Our community Christmas trees were held at the schoolhouse in Prairie. I remember once Hazzard Armenstrout doubled for Santa.

**Bess Conn Fields** — My childhood was spent at Edison. We used to string popcorn to decorate the tree. I remember the benches we sat on and a neighbor boy dressed as Santa.

**Jessie Stafford Cockreham** — Our Christmas celebrations were held in the dance hall down by the river in Hamilton. I still have a nice doll I got there. The tree often caught on fire, but the men always managed to put it out.

**Grace Brown Cochrun** — We came here in 1885. I well remember a set of dishes I got when I was about 6 years old. We still lived in our original house then.

**Emma Hart** — Once my sister and I took one of the candles in a saucer upstairs with us. We promptly went to sleep. The candle fell over and set things on fire.

## Slipper's Soliloquy

By Fred Slipper