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RICHMOND, VA., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1913.

THE WEATHER TO-DAY—Rain.

PRICE TWO CENTS.

# EIGHTY PERSONS CRUSHED TO DEATH IN NEEDLESS PANIC

### Children Had Gathered to Receive Gifts From Santa Claus When Man Thrusts Head Into Hall and Cries "Fire."

### IN AN INSTANT PANIC REIGNS, AND EXITS ARE FILLED WITH DEAD

### Narrow Stairway Is Principal Exit, and It Soon Overflows With Bodies of Men, Women and Children Who But a Moment Before Had Been Joyous in Yuletide Festivities—Police- men and Firemen Enter Hall by Fire Es- capes and Force Maddened People Back. Corpses are Carried to Morgue Through Ranks of Moaning, Wailing Women.

Calumet, Mich., December 24.—Eighty persons, mostly children, were killed to-night at a Christmas celebration of copper mine strikers in an Italian hall because of a needless panic caused by a false alarm of fire.

While several hundred miners and their wives looked on, the children pressed eagerly towards the stage to receive Christmas presents. At this point a man put his head in at the door of the hall and yell: "Fire!" The cry was taken up by those in the hall. Every one started for the doors. The weaker were thrown to the floor, and those behind tried to climb over those ahead of them. The stairway and other avenues of egress were blocked so effectually that those inside could not get out, and those without could not get in to aid the panic-stricken crowd in the hall. It was some time before the panic subsided.

The alarm was spread outside the hall by a few persons who had been near the door and escaped unhurt. A crowd soon assembled, and the work of clearing the hall was begun. The principal exit was a narrow stairway at the back of the hall. When this had been cleared of the bodies that filled it to the top and a quick accounting had been made, it was found that seventy-four corpses had been piled up beside the hall building. It is thought that a dozen others were carried away by friends.

The dead that were piled up beside the hall included thirty-seven girls, nineteen boys, thirteen women and five men.

### Men and Women Dazed by Tragedy.

Excited men and women stood about the building, some dazed by the sudden change from holiday festivities to tragedy; others calling hysterically for missing children, and a few even threatening vengeance to the rescuers for keeping them back from the long row of bodies.

There was not much work for the many doctors who hurried to the scene as soon as the alarm was spread, for those who were not killed in the first rush were held upright and safe by the very force of the onrush toward the exit. Only three injured persons were taken to hospitals, and a few went home assisted by friends.

For many days the children of the copper mine strikers had waited expectantly for the Christmas tree exercises that had been arranged by the Woman's Auxiliary of the Western Federation of Miners. The entertainment was set for the early evening, and the hall, which is on the second floor, was soon filled to its limit. The children selected to recite Christmas selections and sing carols had finished their part of the program, and the man selected to play the part of Santa Claus had appeared to distribute the presents that were piled around the large illuminated tree.

The children were instructed to march up the aisles to the tree, so that the presents could be handed to them. The aisle was filled with boys and girls, when a large, bearded man thrust his head in at the door of the main hallway and shouted: "Fire!"

### Lives Are Crushed Out Almost in Twinkle.

The cry was repeated throughout the room in several languages as parents rose and rushed forward to get their children. Many lives were crushed out in almost a twinkle. Then the physical impossibility of further movement brought the panic persons to their senses. It was realized too late that there was no fire, but most of those in the hall could not get out of the jam they had caused.

Police and firemen hurried to the building. Several officers climbed the fire-escapes and entered by the windows. In a short time the uninjured and the faint had been pulled from the tangle of human beings and placed in the front of the hall.

Other men began to pull the bodies of the dead and helpless from the stairway and lay them in a room beside the building. This disposition of the crumpled bodies was found inadvisable because of the hysteria it caused among the spectators, and the dead were carried back into the hall as soon as it was emptied of frightened spectators. All the chairs were lined with bodies, and corpses had to be placed in the kitchen of the hall and beneath the stage.

Within an hour almost every person in Calumet was as near the scene as it was possible to get. The police formed a cordon about the place and kept back the crowd. After much effort, a lane was opened through the crowd and the bodies of the children were carried through ranks of moaning and wailing women to Red Jacket village hall, which was turned into a morgue. It was many hours before all the bodies were identified.

During the confusion several bodies of children were wrongly identified by mothers and taken away, only to be returned later by the parents, who had found their own offspring safe. Many parents ran about uncertain whether their children were dead or alive. Many mothers fainted, while fathers cursed all those who interfered with their mad search for lost girls and boys.

### Frantic Women Call for Little Ones.

For hours frantic women ran the streets calling for their little ones. Of the 700 persons in the hall, more than three-fourths were children, many of them having gone without their parents. These fathers and mothers soon rushed to the scene and added to the confusion. They did not understand what had taken place, and hindered the rescuers by insisting on information as to what was the matter.

There was a fire-escape at the rear of the building, but only those who were very near it could make any use of it until after the fatal rush was over. Probably not more than 100 persons escaped by this means. About a score more jumped from the windows near which they sat. As it was not many feet from the ground, the jump did not cause injury.

The Italian Hall was built about five years ago, and was well provided for emergencies. It was thought. The entrance was a hallway about ten feet deep. A stairway about eight feet wide led up from this vestibule to a small landing about eight feet high. The main door of the hall opened on this landing. There is a small cloakroom about ten feet square to one side of the main door. Loss of life was heavy at the small door of this room. The rush apparently turned many against the door and crushed them to death.

The greatest number of dead in any one place, however, was at the bottom of the stairway. Those who reached the stairs first evidently were hurled to the bottom by those behind, and in this fashion the stairway was filled almost to the ceiling. That death in most instances was due to suffocation under the weight of those who fell last was indicated by the fact that few of the corpses bore marks of injuries. Bodies were crumpled and broken, but the features were not cut or bruised.

It was ascertained that there was no fire at or near the building to cause the alarm. Even the Christmas tree did not show any evidence of fire. It was lighted by electricity.

### Futile Attempt to Stem Onrush.

Mrs. Annie Clemens, president of the Woman's Auxiliary, in charge of the entertainment, said she was on the stage directing the distribution of gifts when the panic started. She said when the fire cry spread through the house the women in charge tried to stem the onrush, but their shouts that nothing was wrong were futile.

Even the children were seized with panic, but the small children, (Continued On Second Page.)

# FIGHT PROMISED IF WILLIAMS IS NAMED FOR PLACE

### Original Program Altered in Face of Threat- ened Opposition.

### CHOICE OF WILSON FOR COMPTROLLER

### Name of Richmond Man Was to Have Gone to Senate Before Recess, but Leaders Find That Republicans Have Assumed Hostile Attitude.

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]  
Washington, December 24.—The administration does not intend to lose a single moment in beginning the work of organizing for the new currency system. While President Wilson was hurrying southward today for his holiday at Pass Christian, Secretary McAdoo and Secretary of Agriculture Houston, constituting the majority of the organization committee under the new law, took up their task, giving considerable attention to details.

The law provides that the Comptroller of the Currency shall be a member of the organization committee. This office, however, has been vacant several months. Deputy Comptroller Thomas D. Kane has been acting, but the new currency law makes no provision for the deputy to perform the duties of the comptroller in this matter. It has been generally understood that John Skelton Williams, Assistant Secretary of the Treasury, was to be given this office, which, with its increase in compensation to \$12,000 a year and its added duties and responsibilities, makes it one of the most desirable within the gift of the President.

### May Have Opposition.

The original program contemplated the sending of Mr. Williams' name to the senate yesterday, in the hope that he might be promptly confirmed. Democratic leaders consulted with Republicans, however, and found that if Mr. Williams is nominated as comptroller, the Republicans will insist upon taking their time, and in looking over very carefully into the qualifications and fitness of the nominee before they will permit his confirmation.

There were indications that there might be a most determined opposition to the appointment. The charge was made that the comptroller was included as a member of the Federal Reserve Board because it had been the prearranged plan that Mr. Williams should be comptroller. This opposition has been controlled by the secretary, constituting a quorum that could begin the work, the plan of making the appointment was abandoned until after the holidays.

President Wilson is to have a free hand in the selection of members of the Federal Reserve Board, who will have supreme control of the new currency system. Anticipating that there might be enormous pressure brought to bear for support for this important position, both Democratic and Republican leaders have entered into a gentlemen's agreement that they will not make any recommendations at all, no matter who the candidates may be. The sole responsibility will be passed along to the President, and when the names have been sent to the senate that body will exercise its constitutional rights to scrutinize the selection and to reject any, if senators believe them to be unfit for membership on the Federal Reserve Board.

### First Important Duty.

The first important duty of the Organization Committee is to designate the Federal Reserve districts and the number into which it will be best to divide the country. Then the cities in which the reserve banks for that district shall be located must be selected. The law confines the number of reserve banks to not less than eight, nor more than twelve. Secretary McAdoo said today that he expected to begin the task formally of selecting the Federal Reserve cities to-morrow. He emphasized the fact that those designated will be made with utter disregard for local interests, and solely with a view to the general good and an ability to care for the business of the country.

"We expect to consider this problem," said Mr. McAdoo, "in the light of what will be most beneficial to the entire country. Local interests will have no part in our designations. We will select the cities in the first instance, and then select the city within each district where the Federal Reserve bank will be located."

The number of reserve banks to be designated has not been formally considered, although undoubtedly since the agreement by the conference on the sliding scale, the secretary has given the matter much thought. If the system begins with eight banks, such cities as Boston, New York, New Orleans, Chicago, St. Louis, Denver and San Francisco, cannot be overlooked. It seems assured that in either event, Washington, because of its importance as the seat of government, will be given one of these reserve banks. Philadelphia, although a large city, is adjacent to New York and probably would be within that reserve district. It is likely that the cities of New York, Philadelphia, or Portland and Philadelphia will be considered. The total number of reserve banks, however, does not matter so much because the law provides that are to be established and these are the institutions that will be expected to take care of the purely local conditions.

### Secretary Well Satisfied.

Secretary McAdoo today expressed his satisfaction at the way in which the banks have accepted the enactment of the new law and have responded to it. "The new currency law," said he, "has been accepted by the banks of the country in a thoroughly patriotic manner. I have never had any doubt and have none now, that most of the national banks of the on-

(Continued On Third Page.)

# RICHMOND'S FIRST BIG CHRISTMAS TREE

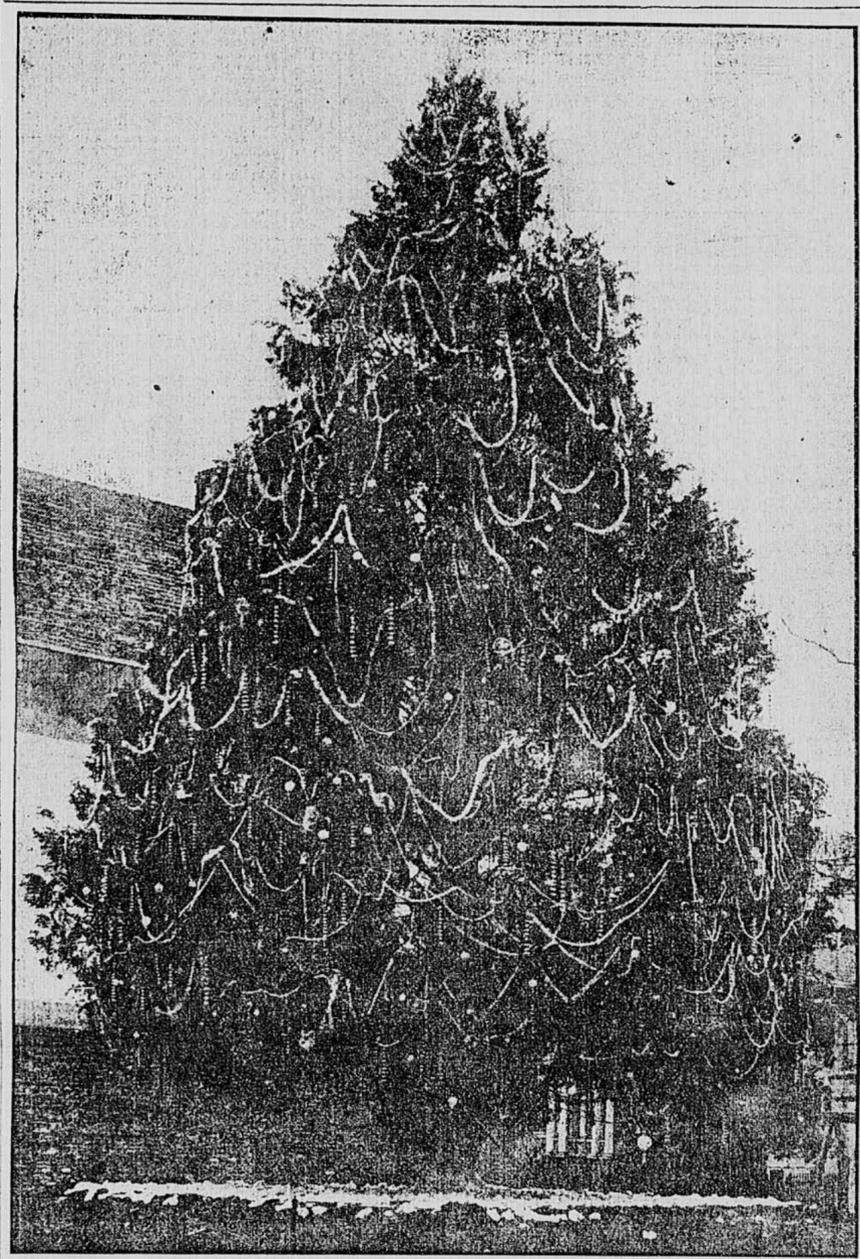


Photo by Foster.

# WALK FORTH FREE ON CHRISTMAS DAY

### Many Convicts Are Given Their Chance for Yuletide Happiness.

# PRISON DOORS ARE OPENED

### Governors Exercise Clemency, but Blease Departs From Usual Custom.

[Special to The Times-Dispatch.]  
Richmond, Va., December 24.—Determined to spread as much Christmas cheer as possible, Governor Craig this afternoon followed up his nine pardons of yesterday by liberating ten additional prisoners, nine of whom were sent up for terms ranging from three years to twenty-five years. The newly freed prisoners hail from many parts of the state. They are Robert Bowling, Franklin County, five years, for burglary; Charles Burton, Vance County, twenty-five years, for second degree murder; Everett M. Talton, Wayne County, fifteen years, for second degree murder; William Burns, Rowan County, nine years, for manslaughter; William Ruffin, Durham County, seven years, for manslaughter; William Gossett, three years, for larceny; E. P. Bruton, Richmond County, ten years, for manslaughter; John Jones, Polk County, fifteen years, for second degree murder; Randolph Harrington, Richmond County, five years, for manslaughter; Bill McGowan, Pitt County, six months, for abandonment.

# PARDONS AS GIFTS

### Ten Prisoners Are Released From Ohio Penitentiary.

Columbus, O., December 24.—Christmas gifts in the form of pardons was made by Governor Cox today to ten prisoners in the Ohio Penitentiary. Headling the list of those given immediate freedom was Paul Zeltner, of Wood County, serving a life sentence for murder. The terms of the other nine prisoners would have expired on or before January 1 next and the Governor granted pardons to them so that they might spend the holidays at home.

# MORE BLEASE PARDONS

### During His Term He Has Released 904 Convicts.

Columbia, S. C., December 24.—The total number of pardons and paroles (Continued On Third Page.)

# UNCLE SAM GIVES CHRISTMAS PARTY

### Great Norway Pine Is Erected on East Plaza of Capitol.

# MARINE BAND LEADS CHORUS

### At Franciscan Monastery Ser- vices in Grotto at Bethlehem Are Reproduced.

Washington, December 24.—Uncle Sam held a Christmas tree party to-night on the east plaza of the Capitol, hundreds of children of Washington attending.

The tree was a huge Norway spruce ablaze with fancy electric lights and brilliant ornaments that scintillated against the gray marble Capitol building. The United States Marine Band led a chorus of 2,000 voices in Christmas carols.

Tableaux of Mary and Joseph on the way to Bethlehem, the shepherds on the hillside, the Christ child in the manger and other incidents of the birth of Christ were enacted.

A group of automobiles parked at the entrance of the Capitol grounds were filled with society folk, among whom were Mrs. Julian James, Mrs. John J. White, the German Ambassador and Countess von Bernstorff and Mrs. Henning Jennings and Miss Katherine Jennings.

### Midnight Mass Celebrated.

A midnight mass identical in all save one respect with that celebrated in the Grotto Chapel at Bethlehem in Judea, where Jesus was born, was sung to-night in the Bethlehem Grotto at the Franciscan Monastery, on the outskirts of Washington.

This is the one place in the world where a reproduction of the Bethlehem services is held and the beautiful little chapel, itself a replica of the one in the Holy Land, was thronged with notices from the national capital, including many diplomats and high government officials.

The only difference between the Washington service and that celebrated in Bethlehem of Judea is a word. In Judea, the words of the Gospel are: "And here she brought forth" and "here laid him in a manger." In Washington the word "there" was substituted for "here."

Among those who attended were Joseph Tumulty and family, secretary to the President; the Austrian Ambassador and Madame Dumba, the Costa Rican Minister and Madame Calvo, Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court and Mrs. White, Judge (Continued On Third Page.)

# WILSON SPEEDING TO VACATION HOME

### President Spends Christmas Eve Aboard His Private Car.

# FAMILY CIRCLE IS BROKEN

### For First Time, Second Daughter Is Not With Him for Holidays.

On Board President Wilson's special, Atlanta, Ga., December 24.—Christmas Eve was spent quietly by President Wilson and his family on board their private car en route to Pass Christian, Miss., where they will arrive at daybreak. After an all-day journey through the Carolinas and Georgia, which brought recollections of the Wilsons' early residence in these parts, the family dined together, spent a short while in the observation parlor and retired early.

One member of the family circle was missing for the first time on Christmas Eve, the second daughter, Mrs. Francis B. Sayre, who is on her honeymoon trip in Europe. Her absence was recalled, especially to the group as the train stopped at Gainesville, Ga., where she, as well as the President's eldest daughter, Miss Margaret Woodrow Wilson, were born, twenty-eight and twenty-six years ago. The President and Mrs. Wilson stood on the car platform and pointed out the house to their daughters—the Misses Eleanor and Margaret.

### Asks for Tom Haney.

"Where's Tom Haney?" asked the President of the handful of persons who had gathered at the rear of the train.

"Here he is," said a voice, as the individual referred to, a somewhat aged but vigorous looking station-master, appeared.

The President and the station-master shook hands warmly. Haney has been station-master for nearly fifty years and remembers the family well.

"Who lives in the old house?" the President asked, and the station-master recalled the direction of the questioners' nod that he meant the birthplace of his daughters.

"Nobody, it's closed up," said Haney, "but how are you, Mr. President, we hear you have been ill?"

"I'm quite well," replied the President smilingly.

"Maybe you had better not stand out in the cold," cautioned some one in the crowd, and he thanked them for their solicitude.

The engines were changed quickly (Continued On Eighth Page.)

# CROWD OF 20,000 APPLAUDS STAR AND GILDED TREE

### Cheers Electric Display at Big Community Celebration.

### OCCASION UNIQUE IN CITY'S HISTORY

### Man-Made Star of Bethlehem Journeys From City Hall to Tip of Christmas Tree, Ablaze With Thousands of Col- ored Lights—School Choir Sings.

Twenty thousand people, packed in solid phalanx around the old Ford Hotel lot, turned their eyes skyward at the stroke of 6 last night to watch a brilliant white star sail slowly eastward from the City Hall to the tip of a Christmas tree, the like of which was never known outside of little boys' dreams.

The deep-toned bell in the City Hall tower was still quivering with the music of the sixth peal, when the mammoth star, up to that moment a shrouded device of wire and steel, burst forth into light. For a bare ten seconds it remained motionless. Then it broke from its moorings and moved slowly across the Eleventh Street chasm alive with Christmas worshipers, to its forlorn position over the Christmas tree that was reached by a God-fearing people to symbolize the spirit of giving.

### Tree Ablaze With Light.

At the moment when the star, after a two-minute journey over its fragile tramway, stood directly overhead the giant spruce, Miss Cora Lucille Thompson, daughter of City Electrician Thompson, turned a magic switch, and the Community Christmas Tree sprang into life—radiant in tints of 2,000 red, white and blue electric lights, glittering in the tinsel and tinsel of Christmas, hung with make-believe silver and make-believe gold.

For a moment the great tree remained mute in admiration. It became a child again, and gazed in delight upon this thing of the forest in royal livery. Then slowly there arose a subdued hum, which grew and grew until the acclaim became a mighty demonstration stirring the giant gathering from the picket fence of Capitol Square to the farthest point of vantage on the north line of Broad Street.

With the first ripple of applause came the shrill cheers of the small boy and girl to whom heaven, according to the poet, is nearer than it is to fathers and mothers. The youngsters formed a full hall of the big gathering, and shouted their greetings joyously to the city's first municipal Christmas tree.

### School Choir Sings.

With the first movement of the star toward the fairy-tree, a choir of 2,000 school children, under the direction of Professor Meyer, launched forth into the hymn, "O, Little Town of Bethlehem," aided by the subdued accompaniment of Kesslich's Band, hidden deep in the underground.

Perched high in the elevated platform a motion-picture operator threw a brilliant quadrangle of light on a curtain suspended on the wall of the building the projector, launched forth into the Ford Hotel lot. A moment later there appeared on the curtain in bold relief the words of the hymn that was pouring from 2,000 throats.

As the star drew nearer and nearer to its goal more and more people joined in the singing. The hymn grew in volume, seeming to accompany the moving star in its triumphant progress. By the time it stood poised over the crown of the Christmas tree the hymn had attained the proportions of a mighty anthem in which all, young and old, joined, whether they could sing or not.

### Like Star of Bethlehem.

It was not difficult, while watching the man-made star, to see the heavenly star through the heavens last night, to call to mind the night some two thousand years ago when three wise men came from out of the East and rejoiced with exceeding great joy at the sight of a heavenly-fashioned star, which led them eastward to a lowly home in Judea.

Like the star that guided the wise men, last night's star, moved from the west to the east. In February, B. C. 4—it is not generally known—the star was born four years before what is commonly reckoned as the Christian era—the Star of Bethlehem paused at the end of the eastward journey, and the manger-crib of the Redeemer.

Last night, to pursue the parallel one step further, the community star, instead of the prophecies of the prophets, next to the cross, is the most intimate expression of the world-religion which the lowly manger child founded.

"After the first hymn came others, 'Hark, the Herald Angels Sing, Glory to the New-Found King,' 'Holy Night, Peaceful Night,' 'Joy to the Lord,' and 'O, Come All Ye Faithful,' followed each other with only an interval of a minute or two between one hymn and another, during which the tree-dancers during the actual singing—was lighted up again. Lights were cut off during the singing to make more legible song words on the curtain.

### Reverence Holds Crowd.

The occasion of the history of the history of Richmond. Always a city in which the spirit of Christmas reigned strong, noted for its open heart, its open heart, it responded whole-heartedly to the idea of rearing a mighty Christmas tree, the like of which is particular, but everybody's. In this spirit assembled 20,000 of its citizens last night and there is little wonder at the statement of the police that it was the most orderly large crowd that ever assembled in the city.

Ropes stretched on the property line along Broad Street from the City Hall eastwardly, held in check the multitudes that began swarming to the scene shortly after 5 o'clock. Within eight to twelve deep around the entire circumference of the barrier. On the Capitol Street side the crowd filled the park square and overflowed into the Capitol Square.

### In a Modern Setting.

To the philosopher in the crowd, the occasion offered the interesting study