



Red River Aggie

Christmas 1918

The flu brought about a pleasant Christmas celebration for the students at the Northwest School of Agriculture. That sounds like making the most of a bad thing and a true illustration of the old saying, "It is an ill wind that doesn't blow someone some good." It happened thus, however. On account of the influenza epidemic, the fall term had been shortened. To make up time, only two days were taken for the holiday vacation—Christmas day and the day following. Many students did not go home, preferring to celebrate the Christmas joys at the school. The festivities began with a good old-fashioned Scandinavian Christmas Eve supper. There was "lutefisk" swimming in melted butter, "kott bullar" that made your mouth water, and "lefse" just like mother used to make, besides other goodies too numerous to mention.

The evening was spent at Senior Hall. About sixty students and twenty of the campus folks were there. The cozy parlors had been suitably decorated, a beautiful Christmas tree was all alight, and the fireplace glowed with a Yule log all ablaze. Following a short program of songs, readings, recitations, and an address by Superintendent Selvig on "The Christmas Spirit," the company joined in a series of merry parlor games. There were tests of skill and with that brought great amusement.

Popcorn balls and apples were next brought out in great quantities. The rapidity with which they disappeared was evidence of the wonderful capacity of young people in holiday season.

Just at this point there was a loud noise in the chimney of the fireplace. Sleighbells had already been heard in the distance. Many ran to the window in the hopes that the sleigh would be seen before "airplaning" to the roof, but old Santa beat them to it. For presto, in the very center of the room he stood with a huge pack on his shoulders, his gray hair, snowy beard, kindly eye and generous proportions making him that mysterious figure about whom we read so much, but about whose whereabouts, excepting at Christmas, we know so little. There were presents for all and loads of them. The crowd was so absorbed in the surprises that the packages revealed that they suddenly discovered that Santa had left as suddenly and mysteriously as he had come. By this time Christmas morn was approaching and soon Senior Hall settled down to its usual nightly stillness awaiting the day of Christmas gladness, and joy on earth, peace and good will to men.

Christmas day was spent quietly. A number of the students attended church in Crookston. A sumptuous turkey dinner was served at noon. The evening was spent pleasantly at parlor games in the gymnasium.