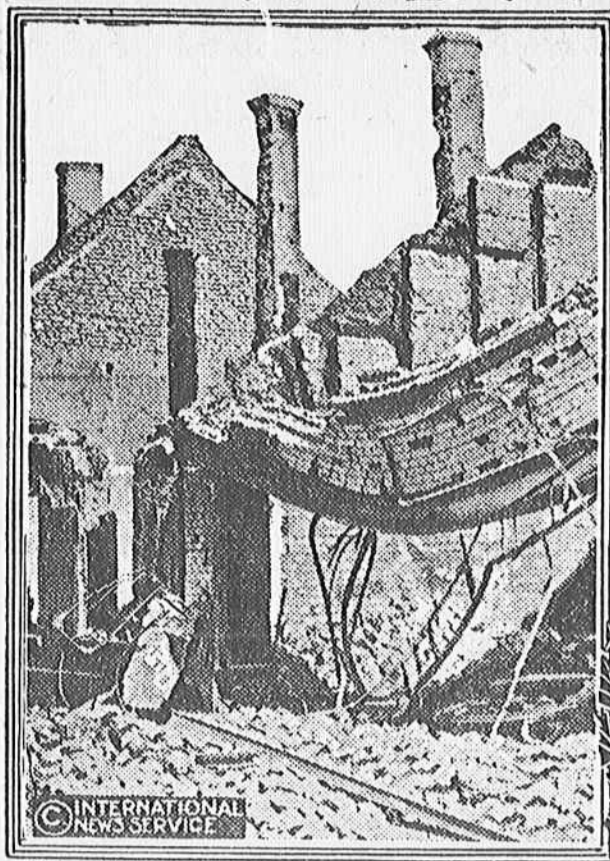
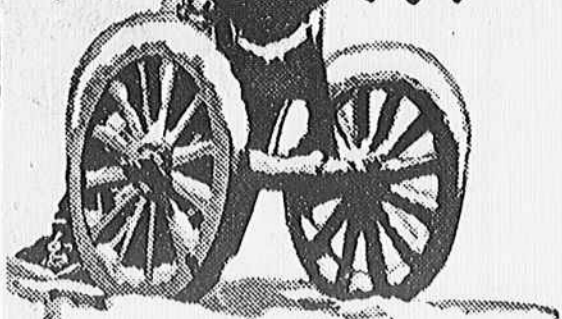


Christmas in Europe



INTERNATIONAL NEWS SERVICE



THE NATAL DAY OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE BRINGS TO MILLIONS OF HOMES ONLY THE MEMORY OF DEAR ONES FOREVER GONE AND THE GLOOM OF FADING HOPE.

By JERLE DAVIS.
WHAT a ghastly holiday Christmas will be in Europe this year. Millions of families in mourning, millions of women and children starving, millions of graves in ruins, millions of new graves, millions of dead men that haven't even the shelter of earth, millions of square miles of fertile land laid waste by war, millions of men killing fathers, husbands, brothers, sons and sweet-hearts.

Belgium, Serbia, northern France and Poland are a Hades of wreckage. In Germany everyone is living on short rations and turning all energies to the pursuit of war. Even the half-grown boys of France are under arms awaiting the call to the trenches. Austria and Italy and England and Russia and Bulgaria are pouring their money into the mill that turns out guns and explosives while the poor exist in the misery of semistarvation, making their mite of food and fuel and clothing for the making their turn in the "bread line."

The warring Europe's able-bodied men are in one capacity or another. In the cities and villages of the contending little neutral nations—men, veterans of other wars, and those who are recovering from wounds in this or that. Everywhere are hospitals.



DISTRIBUTING CHRISTMAS PACKAGES TO ORPHANS IN FRANCE



FIGHTING FOR BREAD IN POLAND

THE ORPHANS' CHRISTMAS BEFORE THE WAR IN FRANCE

Schools, churches, factories, homes—every sort of habitable place is filled with wounded. And one of the most flourishing enterprises over there is the sale of artificial limbs.

Even from Asia comes the wall of sorrow, for Mohammedan Turkey is religiously slaughtering its hundreds of thousands of Christian Armenian subjects. News dispatches of the last few days describe the terrible plight of refugees—peniless, ragged, hungry, diseased, noncombatants and exhausted, beaten soldiers—who are sweeping out of desolated Serbia into Greece. We read of women with children in arms spending a month tramping through the snow-covered mountains, hoping in the end to find a little warmth and food and peace. We read of frozen roadways strewn with the bodies of those that stopped on the way for a bit of rest—and never went on.

None of the hundred million of us in the United States can appreciate the horror of it all. Some of our war correspondents over there have seen and heard, but none has suffered and endured as those who are a part of the conflagration.

Santa Claus will have a sorry time abroad this year. Fathers and mothers have neither the heart nor the means of commemorating the birth of the Child of Bethlehem and his mission among men. Of necessity they and their children will fast instead of feast—if there is any feasting it will be a feast of prayer and hope.

America sent no Christmas ship abroad this year. Why not? some of us may ask. Why not?—with the United States at the height of prosperity and blessed with peace. Perhaps because we realize what a horror the war is. A prominent newspaper man in one of our large cities—a man who had much to do with the success of the project last year—had this to say when the question was brought up:

"A Christmas ship this year—a boatload or two or three boatloads of dolls and jumping-jacks and red-top boots for the kids of Europe? I shall not dwell on the fact that the warring nations have become much more deadly in their hate and suspicion and probably would refuse safe passage for the cargoes from one country to another. I shall not concern myself with the fact that the nations

embroidered look upon the United States as a greedy animal growing fat and sleek feeding on their life blood, and probably would return our gifts to us with curt "No-thank-yous."

"Instead I shall confess that I am weighed down with the hopelessness of the situation. Here in America we have all we may reasonably ask of Providence—considering our own sins of politics and social injustice. Over there they are cursed beyond the power of words to describe, and the curse will be felt for generations.

"Millions in Europe are dying in the agonies of starvation, cold and disease for want of food, clothing, shelter and medical aid. What a ghastly joke it would be in these circumstances for the richest and luckiest nation to offer those millions of pitiful children a little candy and fruit when they need milk and broth, mittens when they need blankets and clothing, dolls and toy trains when they need doctors and nurses and sanitary supplies. No, this is no time for polite mementoes. Let us concentrate on giving the only real help that would suffice and that would be welcome—peace as soon as possible."

Let us look upon the manner in which Europe celebrated Christmas before the war.

In France and Belgium on Christmas eve the barbaques, or booths, appear in the streets without hindrance, and are all ablaze with candles and glittering treasures, for every household must contain some bright trinket in honor of Noel. The midnight mass is thronged; the magnificent Christmas hymn is chanted everywhere, and then all is gleeful holiday for an hour or so, for it is Christmas morning, the peace-making morning of the world!

There is the boudin to be eaten, the calen, or Christmas lamp, symbolical of the star that guided the Magi to Bethlehem, to be lighted, the little creche to be exposed, and all happiness, all good-will to everyone to be expressed before retiring with the grand chorale of peace sounding in the ears. In the country the lads and lassies merrily drag home the buche de Noel, corresponding to our Yule log, which is kindled by the head of the family; the boudin must be eaten and the hot spiced wine sent roasting, and many a misunderstanding is made clear beside the Christmas

fire on this, the day of good will.

In Germany and Austria every housemother and every father makes Christmas the feast for the children, the great day of reunion, the glad time when all meet under the old roof-tree, and social customs prevail over religious observances. The Christmas tree is ubiquitous—everyone has it, rich or poor—and no one omits Weihnacht's Bescheerung or Christmas gifts. To provide these, the German people will, if need be, save up half the year. Each member of the household must have something as a surprise, generally serviceable presents that are often needed and always acceptable.

Singularly enough, the Christmas is not celebrated as one would expect in Italy. There this night of the year is less a religious festival than a fair. The world seems absorbed in delirious excitement, and all crowd round Pulcinella and divert themselves hilariously till the churches claim them for the midnight mass. But the fun goes on; they laugh gleefully, as only Italians can laugh, enjoy themselves to their hearts' content, but the celebrations are not home celebrations; it is a general, not a domestic, feast.

In Russia and Poland the children put their shoes filled with hay outside the door for the horses of St. Nicholas, and it is believed in most sections that St. Nicholas comes first on a preparatory visit ten days before Christmas to learn which children have been good. He leaves nuts and candy in the shoes of those who have been good, but nothing for those who have been bad, who thus know that they may expect no presents on the real Christmas day.

In Serbia and the other Balkan countries, at dawn on the day before Christmas the sturdy peasant proprietor dispatches his sons to the forest. On reaching the spot where the destined Christmas tree stands, the axebearer offers up a prayer; then he draws on a pair of gloves, takes a handful of corn, flings it against the tree, and says, "Good morning, and a happy Christmas to you." This done, he addresses himself to the task of felling, paying careful attention to the laws of the "badnyak," which prescribes among other things that all the cuts be made on one particular side. Once felled, the tree is carried home and leaned against the east side of the house, where it remains till evening. Then the wife lights two candles and places one on either side of the doorway, while the husband goes forth to bring in the "badnyak."

The master of the house now throws three nuts into each of the four corners of the room, saying as he does so: "In the name of the Father; in the name of the Son; in the name of the Holy Ghost—Amen!"

All night everyone remains gloating over the crackling, roasting pig, with an eagerness of anticipation proportionate to the zeal with which they have observed the six weeks' fast enjoined by the Greek orthodox church. By this time Christmas day has dawned, and on Christmas everyone must go to service.

BIGGEST HARVEST EVER RECORDED

LARGE CROPS AND GOOD PRICE RULE THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY.

AN UNUSUAL COMBINATION

For First Time in History Extraordinary Production and High Prices Have Prevailed.

Washington.—The nation's harvests this year have surpassed any ever before recorded. The value of the principal farm crops, based on prices paid to farmers December 1, was announced by the department of agriculture in its final estimate as \$5,568,773,000 making 1915 a banner year both in value and in production of crops.

The unusual situation of extraordinary production and high prices, probably never before so pronounced is credited principally to the European war.

With the price of grain soaring as the war progressed, American farmers began the season by planting greater areas to grain. The acreage of the principal crop this year aggregated approximately 486,570 square miles. That is larger than the combined area of Germany, France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Switzerland.

Corn was planted on 108,321,000 acres, the second largest area ever planted, and the harvest was 3,054,535,000 bushels, the second largest crop ever grown. Its value was \$1,755,859,000, exceeding that of the previous most valuable crop by \$33,000,000.

New records were made in production by wheat, oats, barley, rye, sweet potatoes, rice and hay, while tobacco closely approached its production record, 1,103,415,000 pounds, made in 1910. Each of these crops, in addition, established records as being the most valuable crop ever grown, except in the case of barley and tobacco.

Production of the first billion bushel wheat crop and second three-billion bushel corn crop were features of the year. Wheat acreage aggregated 59,898,000 acres, or 6,000,000 more than ever before. The yield was 16.9 bushels an acre, the largest acre yield for winter and spring wheat combined ever attained in this country. The final estimates of production was 1,011,505,000 bushels with a value of \$930,302,000. The crop exceeded last year's which was a record, by more than 120,000,000 bushels and by \$50,000,000 in value.

Oats, rye, potatoes, sweet potatoes and tobacco all were planted on record areas. Oats exceeded its record production of 1912 by 122,000,000 bushels and its record value of 1914 by \$56,000,000. Barley production was 13,000,000 bushels more than the 1912 record crop and was worth \$4,000,000 more than the former most valuable crop that grows in 1914. Rice passed the 1913 record by 3,200,000 bushels and its 1912 record value by \$1,700,000.

The apple crop was 76,670,000 valued at \$156,407,000; the bean crop, in the three principal producing states, 9,325,000 bushels—a decrease of 1,688,000 bushels—valued at \$27,558,000 and the cranberry crop, 457,000 bushels, valued at \$2,845,000. The value of these three crops are included in the year's total.

The value of each crop was announced as follows:

The value this year of each crop, based on its farm price on December 1, with last year's value, is announced as follows: (in thousands, i. e., 000 omitted).

Crop	1915	1914
Corn	\$1,755,859	\$1,722,870
Winter wheat	622,012	675,623
Spring wheat	308,290	262,927
All wheat	930,302	938,550
Oats	955,569	499,431
Barley	122,199	105,303
Rye	41,298	37,018
Buckwheat	12,408	12,892
Flaxseed	24,080	19,540
Potatoes	28,212	24,600
Sweet potatoes	221,101	198,609
Rice	46,081	41,294
Hay	912,320	779,068
Tobacco	96,641	101,411
Cotton	602,393	525,374
Sugar beets	35,800	30,158

In addition to these crops other farm products, such as minor crops and animals and animal products, will bring the year's total to about \$10,000,000,000.

Other details of the report show: (Production in 000's.)

Corn: Production, 3,054,535 bushels, against 2,672,804,000 last year. Acre yield 25.2 bushels, against 25.8 last year. December 1 farm price, 57.5 cents a bushel against 61.4 last year.
Winter wheat: Production 655,045 bushels, against 684,909,000 last year. Acre yield 16.2 bushels, against 19.0 last year. Price 95.0 cents, against 98.6 last year.
Spring wheat: Production 359,469 bushels, against 296,027,000 last year. Acre yield 18.3 bushels, against 11.8 last year. Price 86.5 cents, against 98.6 last year.
All wheat: Production 1,014,514 bushels, against 981,017,000 last year. Acre yield 16.9 bushels, against 16.6 last year. Price 92.0 cents, against 98.6 last year.
Oats: Production 1,540,362 bushels, against 1,141,060,000 last year. Acre yield 37.8 bushels, against 29.7 last year. Price 56.1 cents, against 52.8 last year.
Barley: Production 122,199 bushels, against 105,303,000 last year. Acre yield 32.6 bushels, against 25.8 last year. Price 51.7 cents, against 54.3 last year.
Rye: Production 41,298 bushels, against 37,018,000 last year. Acre yield 42.75 bushels, against 37.8 last year. Price 78.7 cents, against 76.1 last year.
Buckwheat: Production 12,408 bushels, against 12,892,000 last year. Acre yield 19 bushels, against 18.2 last year. Price 155 cents, against 152.2 last year.
Flaxseed: Production 24,080 bushels, against 19,540,000 last year. Acre yield 64 bushels, against 8.3 last year. Price \$1.75 against \$1.26 last year.
Rice: Production 457,000 bushels, against 328,449,000 last year. Acre yield 37.1 bushels, against 34.1 last year. Price 62.5 cents, against 62.4 last year.

SPEND HONEYMOON AT HOT SPRINGS, VA.

PRESIDENT WILSON AND BRIDE WILL BE AT HOMESTEAD HOTEL.

REMAIN UNTIL NEW YEAR

Will Be Away From White House Two Weeks Unless Developments Necessitate Early Return.

Washington.—President Wilson and Mrs. Edith Bolling Galt were married at 8:30 o'clock and left afterward to spend their honeymoon at Hot Springs, Va. The President and his bride traveled in a private car attached to a special train leaving here at 11:10 o'clock which is due to arrive in Hot Springs next morning at 8:15 a. m.

At Hot Springs, Mr. and Mrs. Wilson will live at the Homestead Hotel until after New Year's Day unless some development should necessitate the President's earlier return to the capital. Two White House automobiles have been sent on ahead and the couple expect to spend their honeymoon motoring, golfing and walking over the mountain trails. Beside the secret service guard, the party was accompanied by a stenographer. The President will keep in touch with the White House over special wires.

Shortly after 10 o'clock the President and Mrs. Wilson entered a waiting White House automobile and motored to Alexandria, across the Potomac, to take their private car there and avoid a crowd at the railroad station in the city.

Hot Springs, Va.—President Wilson and his bride, the former Mrs. Norman Galt, arrived here shortly after 9 o'clock to spend their honeymoon. They were met at the train by a crowd of several hundred people who applauded as they alighted from their private car.

NEW NOTE RENEWS DEMANDS.

Austria Must Pay Indemnity, Punish Commander and Disavow Act.

Washington.—The new American note to Austria-Hungary regarding the sinking of the Italian steamship Ancona has been cabled to Ambassador Penfield for presentation to the Vienna foreign office.

Secretary Lansing and other officials of the state department declined to divulge any information concerning the communication. From other reliable sources, however, came a strong intimation that the final draft of the note had been completed by Secretary Lansing during the day and had been put in code and started on its way over the cables.

A veil of secrecy has surrounded the communication ever since a White House messenger carried a preliminary draft from President Wilson to Secretary Lansing. However, it is known that the secretary spent considerable time at work developing the ideas the president had outlined.

As completed the note is believed to have been considerably more lengthy than the first. Certain portions of the text of the note were said to be nearly identical with portion of the first. The demands of the United States which are reiterated are for disavowal, punishment of the submarine commander and reparation by the payment of indemnity for the Americans killed and injured.

For Great Merchant Marine.

Washington.—American shipyards have under construction now more vessels than ever before were building in the United States to add to an American merchant marine whose gross tonnage is the largest in the country's history, said a report issued by the commission of navigation.

Newspapers Quit Party.

London.—A Christiania dispatch to the Morning Post, says that several newspaper correspondents as the result of a quarrel, will quit the Ford peace expedition while the steamer is in port.

Says War Will Soon Be Over.

Christiania, via London.—"Every nation in the world will soon look upon American peace pilgrims as taking the initiative in stopping history's worst war. The landing of the peace expedition in Europe will be recorded as one of the most benevolent things the American republic ever did," said Henry Ford to the Associated Press representative on stepping ashore on Norwegian soil. The steamship Osar II, carrying the Ford peace expedition, arrived at this port on Saturday after a 14-days' voyage.

Handle Much Farm Product.

Washington.—Farmers' co-operative marketing and purchasing organizations will transact this year a total business amounting to more than \$1,400,000,000 according to an estimate made in the annual report of the Office of Markets and Rural Organization of the Department of Agriculture, just made public. While agricultural co-operation in the United States is far more prevalent than is generally believed, the report says, it is not yet upon a sufficient strong business basis.