

Highland County Historical Society celebrates 50th anniversary, Part XLII

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Even though this edition of *The Highland County Press* will come out Halloween weekend, this article is about Christmas. The stores are already full of Christmas decorations and, likewise, the Highland House will be decorated next week. Why so early? Because time flies by so very fast, this special season will seem to be over before it has begun even with this early start.

Ms. HH Christmas, aka Arlene Huffman, tells us that the Highland House will again have 14 or more trees decorated by Highland County organizations. The color theme is gold (golden anniversary, get it?). The temporary display will be a large collection of Nativity scenes.

In Volume 1. No. 4 "Revelations A Magazine for the People" published December 1905 by Revelations Publishing Company, Hillsboro, in the HH library by way of Ms. Lizzie Muntz is found the following unattributed article, "Christmas in Hillsboro."

"The Christmas spirit was abroad among the people of both town and country this year in an unusual degree. The stores where holiday goods of any kind were sold, enjoyed a phenomenal business. Shoppers were in the town from the country and from the smaller towns from fifteen and twenty miles away. Many of them came over our new Traction Road.

The Christmas celebrations of the town commenced in the city schools. On the Friday before Christmas interesting exercises were given by the pupils of various grades, which were attended by many visitors. The churches also were full of Christmas life and spirit. On Sunday (Christmas eve) most of the churches had their Christmas service of song and appropriate sermon.

The young people's societies and the Sunday schools also gave afternoon and evening services on Sunday. On Christmas Day (Monday) St. Mary's Catholic Church commenced the religious services of the day by a five o'clock celebration of mass. Other services were held during the morning at this Church, and crowds of worshipers were seen coming and going.

St. Mary's Episcopal Church held Christmas services at 10:00. A large congregation enjoyed the beautiful flowers, Christmas greens, the joyous music of trained voices and an appropriate sermon by the Rector, the Rev. Louis Durr.

At seven o'clock the Methodists, Presbyterians, Christians and Episcopalians all had their Sunday school exercises and each had a Christmas tree with a treat for all. At the Methodist Church, there was much innocent fun. The pastor and the dignified officers of



the church became as little children that evening and received their little toys from the tree amidst much laughter and good will.

At the Christian Church Santa Claus came down a real chimney and distributed gifts. A free oyster supper was also served at this church to all who attended this service. The Baptists had a most happy Christmas service on Sunday in their beautiful new church. (Picture on cover of magazine.) The United Brethren also had a treat for their children. There was a beautiful tree laden with gifts for all the children at the Home on Christmas Day.

The stores were open part of the day on Christmas and enjoyed a good business. There were many happy reunions of families. The boys and girls came home from school, married sons and daughters came to the old homes with their families. There was much friendship giving as well as family giving. The poor were remembered also by generous individuals and by the various churches. There were many happy hearts and homes in Hillsboro on this children's festival day. The Christ spirit of love and good will prevailed all over our little city."