

CHRISTMAS and NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS FROM KING'S COUNTY

What Was The Star of Bethlehem?

Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.

Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east. And are come to worship him — Matthew II, 1 and 2

What did the Magi, the wise men of the East, really see? In St. Matthew's Gospel their reported references to the star are vague. What is more, there is no hint given by St. Matthew that the star was seen by anyone other than the Magi.

Fred Hoyle, one of the world's foremost astronomers, reports that there is no record of the star in any of the Roman records of the time. And Sir Harold Spencer Jones, Britain's Astronomer Royal,

says there is no reference to it in the contemporary Chinese astronomical records.

Yet there seems never to have been any serious suggestion that the Magi's story was recorded wrongly or, indeed, that it was their imagination.

There is no disputing that the wise men did come to Jerusalem. Some extraordinary force compelled them to leave their distant homes and make what, even today, is a difficult journey.

No evidence exists that they were either just merchants or wandering scholars.

They had without doubt come in search of a King.

The question of the star, though, has intrigued men for centuries. Some ingenious theories have been advanced. The great astronomer Johan Kepler (1571 - 1630), who first substantiated the theory that the earth revolves around the sun, spent much time trying to find a solution. In the process he probably came closest to a satisfactory physical explanation — if, indeed, there is one.

He calculated that there must have been a conjunction of the planets Jupiter and Saturn in the month of May, in the year 7 B. C.

To an observer on earth the two planets would have appeared close together and both would have been relatively near the earth. They would then have drifted apart and come together again in the following September, according to his calculations.

The spectacle would have been awe-inspiring. And it would have been particularly impressive to observers in Palestine.

From these findings Kepler believed he could settle scholarly disputes which had been waging for centuries over the exact date of Christ's birth.

It was left to another German astronomer, Christian Ludwig Ideler (1766 - 1846), to elaborate on Kepler's theory. He checked the earlier calculations and reported that under certain conditions of visibility the two planets might well

have appeared as one breathtakingly brilliant star.

Supporting this theory about the possibility of poor visibility was the Biblical report that the Magi for a while lost sight of the star and saw it again only after they had seen Herod, left Jerusalem, and were on their way to Bethlehem.

The Magi's report that they had lost sight of the star could also be partly explained by the fact that the two planets had come together, separated and then re-united.

The Kepler-Ideler theory remained virtually untouched until a Cambridge don who was also secretary of the Royal Astronomical Society, the Reverend Charles Pritchard (1808 - 1893), decided to investigate it further.

He checked back through the calculations of both astronomers... and he found a mistake.

When this was rectified, the revised calculations showed that the second meeting of the two planets would have taken place not in September, but in December. His calculations were double-checked and confirmed by the then Astronomer Royal.

To this Pritchard added the claim that any observer in Jerusalem, on arrival in Bethlehem the "star" would have appeared to be on the distant horizon.

It was this that apparently made Pritchard dissatisfied with the theory, for dissatisfied he certainly was.

But, he admitted, although this would have appeared so from Jerusalem, on arrival in Bethlehem the "star" would have appeared to be on the distant horizon.

It was this that apparently made Pritchard dissatisfied with the theory, for dissatisfied he certainly was.

He conceded, however, that the co-joined planets might well have been the phenomenon reported by St. Matthew since he doubtless had the story at second hand.

Yet the combined work of Pritchard, Kepler and Ideler demonstrated one significant point: although no spectacular phenomenon was recorded by contemporary astronomers, it did not necessarily mean that there was none. For the undisputed linking of the two planets was not recorded by them.

James Hope Moulton, the historian who contributed the section on the Magi to the Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, pointed out that this oversight was probably due to the fact that at the time Palestine was in a fairly turbulent state.

If that was so, is it not possible that the phenomenon might have



A star shines over a stable in Bethlehem. Three Wise Men pay homage to a Mother and Child. Men have been intrigued for centuries by the story of the Star which led them to the stable. What was it?

the birth of Christ.

He said: "There is certainly no such record in the old Chinese annals of the time. Supernovae are rare. They occur about once in 300 years. There has not been one since 1604."

But there still remains unanswered the question: What inspired the Magi to make their journey to Bethlehem in search of a King?

Suppose, however, that the answer is not to be found in astronomy, but rather in astrology.

This suggestion was put to one of the world's best known theological scholars, Monsignor Ronald Knox who, in 1952, re-translated the New Testament from the vulgate Latin.

He made this comment: "It is a mistake to go to astronomy for our guide; we ought to think in terms of astrology."

"If the star, whether a natural or supernatural phenomenon, was a heavenly body of exceptional

brilliance, why is there no suggestion that anybody except the Magi saw it? It looks more as if the Magi — following out the implications of Numbers xxiv, 17, had been on the lookout for a star which would herald the birth of a king in Judaea; and as if a star had appeared (miraculously or providentially) in that particular quarter of the heavens where they were looking for it, at precisely the right moment.

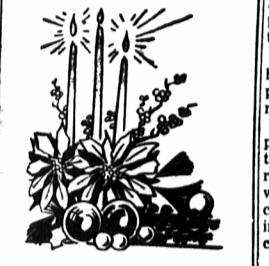
"Verse 9 of Matthew II is rather puzzling; how had they lost sight of the star during their journey? Perhaps only because of cloudy weather. Did the star, in fact, travel in front of them, or does the Evangelist simply report the thing in their own words?"

"It is not easy to see how, in a short distance like that from Jerusalem to Bethlehem, the infinitesimal movement of a heavenly body could be observable to men who weren't using telescopes. It seems more probable that the star, when it reappeared, appeared in a new quarter of the heavens, and was now located (according to the principles of contemporary astrology)

as being directly above Bethlehem; i.e. the star 'was leading them on' in the sense that it had been traveling, apparently, along their own route, and 'had come to a stand' (rather than 'came to a stand') over Bethlehem."

Could something like this be the true answer to the question? Could the theories of astronomers on the subject be nothing more than ingenuity?

The question still stands... What was the Star of Bethlehem?



May we have the pleasure of serving you in the future, as we have in the past.

KING'S MILL
Montague



MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL

BELLE'S DRESS SHOP
Montague
Mrs. L. H. Poole
Phone 68



May all good things come to you at this Christmas season — may good fortune follow you through all the New Year.

POOLE HOTEL
Montague



WELL! it's Christmas

Sincere Good Wishes

We wish at this time to extend our thanks to all our patrons this past season.

YEO'S THEATRE
MONTAGUE



ALL THE BEST!

May the musical bells of Christmas resound with peals of joy and happiness for you and yours this holiday season and throughout the entire New Year.

Wonder Building Of Maritimes
MONTAGUE



"Merry Christmas"

To all our friends and customers — may you enjoy the happiest Holiday season ever!

MONTAGUE
5c to \$1.00 Store
H. D. MURRAY, Proprietor



MERRY CHRISTMAS and Happy & Prosperous NEW YEAR to all our friends and customers

THE PURINA STAFF
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For You

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS and all good wishes for the New Year.

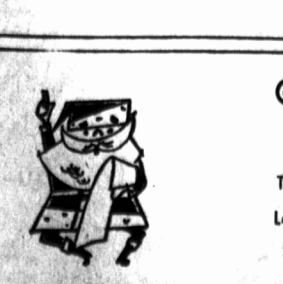
VERE BECK & SON LTD.
Montague and Charlottetown



A Very Merry Christmas TO ALL

Happiness betide you on Christmas; and Good Fortune chart your course throughout the New Year.

WIGHTMAN BUSINESS SERVICE
MONTAGUE
PHONE 136-4

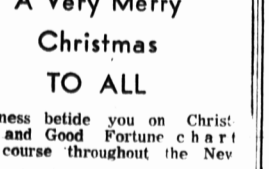


Season's Greetings

Our sincere thanks for your loyal patronage this past year.

At Yuletide

DOUG'S SERVICE STATION
Montague



GREETINGS!

To our friends and customers at this merriest of Seasons. May your Christmas Cheer be the best ever and continue throughout the New Year.

HILCHEY & VANIDERSTINE
Furniture — Self Service Groceries
Montague Phone 80

been even more spectacular and still passed unrecorded? Could it have been a completely new star? "That," says Mr. Fred Hoyle, "is physically possible."

"It is possible for a supernova, a 'new star' to explode in the sky and burn for about a week or a fortnight. But there is no record of anything like this by the Romans of the period and they were fairly thorough astronomers. Such a phenomenon was reported about 350 years later.

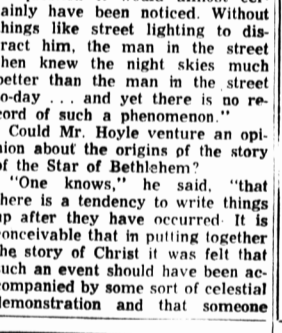
"If a very bright star had appeared in the skies about the time in question it would almost certainly have been noticed. Without things like street lighting to distract him, the man in the street then knew the night skies much better than the man in the street today... and yet there is no record of such a phenomenon."

Could Mr. Hoyle venture an opinion about the origins of the story of the Star of Bethlehem? "One knows," he said, "that there is a tendency to write things up after they have occurred. It is conceivable that in putting together the story of Christ it was felt that such an event should have been accompanied by some sort of celestial demonstration and that someone

remembered just such a phenomenon."

Is it possible that years after the event someone remembered the phenomenon recorded by Kepler, but forgot exactly when it happened?

The Astronomer Royal, Sir Harold Spencer Jones, confirmed the apparent lack of any supernovae or "new stars" around the time of



MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL

Many thanks to our many Friends and Customers during the past year.

JACKSON'S SERVICE STATION
B. A. Dealer
ARMADALE



TO OUR FRIENDS AT THE CHRISTMAS SEASON

We wish our many friends peace and merriment at this joyous holiday season, with a happy New Year to come.

DELUXE DRY CLEANERS
Montague



Merry Christmas

To all whom we have been privileged to serve we extend greetings.

MACPHERSON'S DRESS SHOP
MONTAGUE

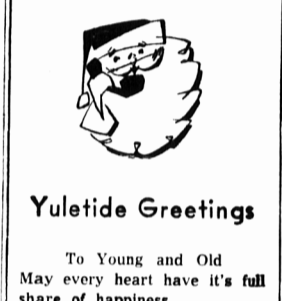


May this Christmas be one you will remember long with happy recollection. And may the New Year be good to you.

BELL'S SERVICE STATION
MONTAGUE

GOD BLESS CHRISTMAS

"There are many things from which I might have derived good, by which I have not profited I dare say," returned the nephew. "Christmas among the rest. But I am sure I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come around, as a good time; a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; and, therefore, uncle, though it had never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I say, God bless it!" — Charles Dickens. "A Christmas Carol."



Yuletide Greetings

To Young and Old May every heart have it's full share of happiness.

Carter's Garage
General Repairs
SOURIS PHONE 70



Merry Christmas

To all whom we have been privileged to serve we extend greetings.

MACPHERSON'S DRESS SHOP
MONTAGUE



May this glorious and Festive Season that is Christmas provide you with much to enjoy and much for which you may give thanks.

C. R. BOEHNER
JEWELLER
MONTAGUE



To Our Many CUSTOMERS and FRIENDS A JOYFUL CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR

VUZZO'S BARBER SHOP
MONTAGUE

Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year TO ALL

P. L. BOUDREAULT
General Merchant
GEORGETOWN



To our friends and patrons all good wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

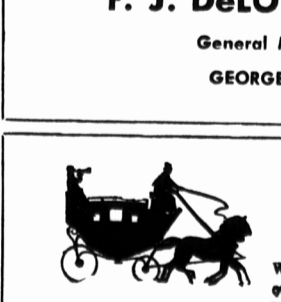
The SOURIS THEATRE
C. N. Richards, Prop.
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FRIENDS!

We wish to be included along with others in extending our greetings to all those with whom we have worked, and those we have served during 1955.

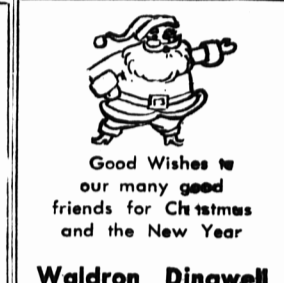
ELMIRA CO-OP
Buy — Benefit — Build
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May Customers and Friends

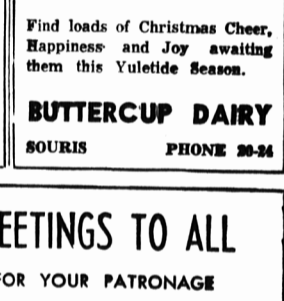
Find loads of Christmas Cheer, Happiness and Joy awaiting them this Yuletide Season.

BUTTERCUP DAIRY
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Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year TO ALL

P. L. BOUDREAULT
General Merchant
GEORGETOWN



CHRISTMAS GREETINGS TO ALL AND MANY THANKS FOR YOUR PATRONAGE

WM. S. MARTELL
Canner of Fish Products — Dealer in Fishermen's Supplies
Best Grades of Hard and Soft Coal
WATER STREET GEORGETOWN



Merry Christmas

And Happy New Year to All

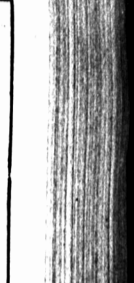
F. J. DeLORY & SONS
General Merchants
GEORGETOWN



SEASON'S GREETINGS!

We wish you and your loved ones our sincere best wishes for the New Year.

MacKENZIE'S GARAGE
GENERAL REPAIRS
R. J. MacKENZIE, Prop. SOURIS PHONE 21-3



And an abundance of Christmas and New Year's Cheer Our promise of dependable service holds true in 1956 as in past years.

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CARDIGAN