

# The Harborwalk

A Newsletter Serving Historical Georgetown County, South Carolina

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## Christmas in the Low Country

Christmas in the Low Country of South Carolina is steeped in traditions brought through the ports of Charleston and Georgetown from many parts of the world. Yet it has a significant twist all its own.

The English brought with them traditions from their heritage, many of which were of Pagan origin. For example the burning of the Yule Log. This is strongly embedded in the Pagan worship of vegetation and fire as well as being associated with magical and spiritual powers. The English Puritans, and our neighbors in New England, condemned a number of customs associated with Christmas, such as the use of the Yule log, holly, mistletoe, etc. Saint Nicholas (the forerunner of our Santa Claus), was banished by most European countries after the Protestant Reformation. Therefore early South Carolinians might have had a visit from Father Chrystmasse, a more adult purveyor of amour.

In the classic novel *"The Golden Christmas, a Tale of Low Country Life"* published in 1852 by South Carolina's William Gilmore Simms, he describes in intimate detail what a low country Christmas was like for the "social elite" of the era. Drawing influence from "Romeo and Juliet" and "A Christmas Carol", Simms centers his plot on the pride of a Huguenot family, the prejudice of an English family, and the plight of star-crossed lovers caught between the feuding houses. Interwoven into the text are engrossing details about the lavish decorations and festivities that were the hallmark of Christmas celebrations in the antebellum South. Simms describes vibrant fireworks, candles nestled in holly, games of whist and backgammon and kissing under the mistletoe, which our Northern cousins would have definitely frowned upon.

One interesting note in the Simms novel is that he introduced the Christmas tree. Prior to about 1850 the Christmas tree had not been adopted in the States except for some regional pockets, such as the German dominated areas of Pennsylvania.

Even before the birth of Christ, trees have been used in many mid winter celebrations. The best record of the tree being used in a indoor Christmas celebration is that of a visitor to Strasbourg in 1601. He records a tree decorated with "wafers and golden sugar-twists (Barleysugar) and paper flowers of all colours". The early trees were biblically symbolic of the Paradise Tree in the Garden of Eden. The many food items were symbols of Plenty, the flowers, originally only Red (for Knowledge) and White (for Innocence). The traditional fir tree has been associated with Christianity for 1000 years. St Boniface, who converted the German people to Christianity, cut down an oak tree that was being worshiped by Pagans. In its place a young fir tree sprung up from the roots of the oak tree. St Boniface took this as a sign of the Christian faith and the tree became a tradition in German Christmas celebrations.

In 1848, the popular Royals, Queen Victoria and her German Prince, Albert, were captured in an etching, standing with their children around a Christmas Tree. Unlike the previous Royal family, Victoria was very popular with her subjects, so what was done at Court immediately became fashionable - not only in Britain, but with fashion-conscious East Coast American Society and of course the Low Country of South Carolina. The Christmas Tree had arrived!

*Photo of Christmas Tree by Malene Thyssen  
Courtesy: Commons Wikimedia.org*



## Upcoming Events

**December 1**, from 11:00AM Georgetown Christmas Parade, hosted by the Georgetown Downtown Business Association. Parade begins at Front and East Bay Street and proceeds the length of Front Street. Judging will be held at Francis Marion Park and Santa will be there to take requests.

**December 7** Brookgreen Gardens' Nights of a Thousand Candles. Musicians play, carolers sing, and visitors experience the excitement that only Nights of a Thousand Candles brings.

**December 8**, The annual Jingle Walk will be followed by the Holiday Open House at the Kaminski House Museum from 3:00-5:00 p.m. Yuletide Tour of Homes – 2007 Presented by the Friends of the Georgetown Library. See article page 4.

**December 15**, Music in Park (church choirs, etc) Francis Marion Park.

### Live at Buzz's Roost

Sat 1st - Angie Capone Band 8-12pm  
Sun 2nd - Angie Capone Solo 4-8pm  
Thur 6th - Bruce Tereo 8-12pm  
Sat 8th - Big Bam Boom 8-12pm  
Sun 9th - Jaynie Trudell 4-8pm  
Thur 13th - The Piks 8-12pm  
Sat 15th - Pastor Pastor 8-12pm  
Sun 16th - Angie Capone Solo 4-8pm  
Thur 20th - Wendell 8-12pm  
Thur 27th - Bruce Tereo 8-12pm  
Sat 29th - Bruce Tereo 8-12pm  
Sun 30th Wendell 4-8pm  
Bag Pipes at sundown each Friday & Saturday  
DJ & Karaoke Fridays 7th, 14th, 21st & 28th 8-12

### Live at Revolve Restaurant and Patio

December 6st, 13th, 20th, 27nd Jazz by Ray Turner  
December 8th & 22th Open Poetry

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# Yuletide Tour of Homes – 2007

The Friends of the Georgetown Library are hosting the Georgetown annual self guided Yuletide Tour of Homes on December 8th. This year ten notable Georgetown homes will be open with festive holiday decorations, great down-home charm and all exhibiting a traditional Low Country Christmas. The owners and homes to be toured are as follows:

**Chip and Melanie Daniels** – This Victorian home c.1902 remained in the same family for about ninety-five years. Recently renovated, it retains its original architectural style and character. The Daniels have on display a train collection going back to the last century.

**Mamie Cunningham**- This home c.1899 sits on the corner of Prince and King Street. Of note is the small guest cottage that is adjacent to the home.

**Vann and Laura Tucker** – This home, c.1901, is thought to have been built by an executive with the Atlantic Coast Lumber Company. The columns were added in 1975 during a renovation of the home.

**Mark and Addie McCoy** – This c.1890 home is of the Queen Anne influence or architectural style. With its new owners, it has recently undergone a restoration.

**Diane Seale Kludt** - 1984 - A newer home filled with family heirlooms, antiques and collectables from days gone by. Shown here is Ms. Kludt's doll and tea collection.



**Cotton Williams and Meg Tarbox** - This stately Georgian home c1765 has graced the banks of the Sampit River for over two and a half centuries. Once relegated to store lumber, it now enjoys the distinction of being Georgetown's only waterfront Bed and Breakfast.

**Sam Murphy and Karen Komar** – One of Georgetown's oldest, this c1740 home has a center entry and two rooms on each floor with the side elevation facing the street. The second level piazza was added in 1915. It is also a popular downtown Bed and Breakfast.



**Decatur and Susan Beckman** – This c1891 home is also of the Queen Anne influence. Since 1902, the Beckman house has been occupied by 4 generations of the same family. Particularly note the stained glass window transoms bordering the top and sides of the front doorway above.

**Minnie Kennedy** - This wonderfully restored early 1900 home is filled with collectibles, antiques, art and treasures of the past.

**Shawn and Cindy Reardon** – c.1900, this home has a front gable and unique wing style of architecture. The attractive and functional outdoor fireplace lends itself to festive gatherings.

**John and Alice Kester** - Built in 2004 this home has multiple breath-taking views of the Bay. It is a true southern-style low country home. The Kesters are Audubon art collectors.

Tickets are \$15 and are on sale at Winyah Fitness Center, Timely Treasures, Harborwalk Books and the Georgetown County Library. Maps are given out at the time of ticket purchase.

## Hanukkah the “Festival of Lights”

Hanukkah, starts sundown on Tuesday December 4 and ends at nightfall on Wednesday December 12. It is actually the 25th day of the Jewish calendar month of Kislev. Lasting for eight days and nights it is celebrated with blessings, games, and festive foods.

A relatively minor holiday in the Jewish year, Hanukkah, due to its closeness to Christmas in the United States, has brought greater attention because of its gift-giving tradition.

The most important Hanukkah tradition is the lighting of the Menorah, known in Hebrew as the hanukiya. A menorah is a candle stand with eight branches and nine candles. The center one being the larger, is the Shamash (servant) and is used to light the other eight. Each of the eight candles represent a day of Hanukkah. One is lit each evening of Hanukkah with a special blessing. The Menorah symbolizes the burning light in the temple, as well as marking the eight days of the Hanukkah festival. Some say it also celebrates the light of freedom won by the Maccabees for the Jewish people.

About 2200 years ago, Greek kings, who reigned from Damascus, ruled over the land of Judea and the Jews living there. One Greco-Syrian King, Antiochus Epiphanes, forbade the Jewish people from praying to their God, practicing their customs, and studying their Torah. Antiochus forced the Jews to worship the Greek gods.

In response to this persecution, Judah Maccabee and his four brothers organized a group of resistance fighters known as the Maccabees. Against great odds, the Maccabees succeeded in driving the Greco-Syrians out of Judea.

After the Maccabees reclaimed the Holy Temple in Jerusalem, they cleaned it removing the Greek symbols and statues. The Temple was rededicated on the 25th day of the month of Kislev in 164 BCE.

According to tradition, when the Maccabees entered the Holy Temple, they discovered that the Greco-Syrians had defiled the oil which was used to light the Temple's menorah. Only one vat of purified oil remained - enough for only one day. It would take the Jews a week to process more purified oil. Then a miracle happened. The Maccabees lit the Menorah and it burned for not one, but for eight days, giving them time to replace the purified oil. This is why the Hanukkah Menorah has eight candles.

# 2nd Annual Winyah Bay Heritage Festival

## January 19 - 20, 2008

### To Benefit the Georgetown County Historical Society

The Winyah Bay Heritage Festival is a celebration of waterfowl decoys, and other hunting and fishing collectibles that have been a part of the region's way of life for more than 300 years. The festival brings together wildlife artists, exhibitors and collectors from all over the Southeast, as well as admiring hunters and fishermen.

All proceeds from the Festival will go to the Georgetown County Historical Society and the Georgetown County Museum. The funding will be used to expand the museum in order to portray the decoy carvings and hunting and fishing legacy of the area. The 2007 Festival generated \$50,000 in proceeds for the new museum building fund.

The 2008 Winyah Bay Heritage Festival will take place January 19 & 20th. Local wildlife biologist, raconteur, and outdoor photographer Phil Wilkinson has been selected as the poster artist with his "South Island Gator" image, which appears below. The weekend of events will take place in various locations within Georgetown County, including the Historic Downtown District, and at the rice plantations along the rivers that flow into the Winyah Bay.

Exhibits will be held at Winyah Indigo Society Hall, Prince Street, East Bay Park and the Winyah Gym on Dozier St. There will be blacksmith demonstrations, children's decoy painting, lectures at the Strand Theatre, decoy carving demonstrations, truck dock building demonstrations, tours of shrimp boats in the harbor, retriever demonstrations, decoy appraisals and story telling events to name a few. On Sunday the event will highlight the South Carolina State Duck Calling Championship. There will be many artists, including nationally acclaimed wildlife artist and conservationist Jim Killen. Mr. Killen was commissioned by the State of South Carolina to cre-

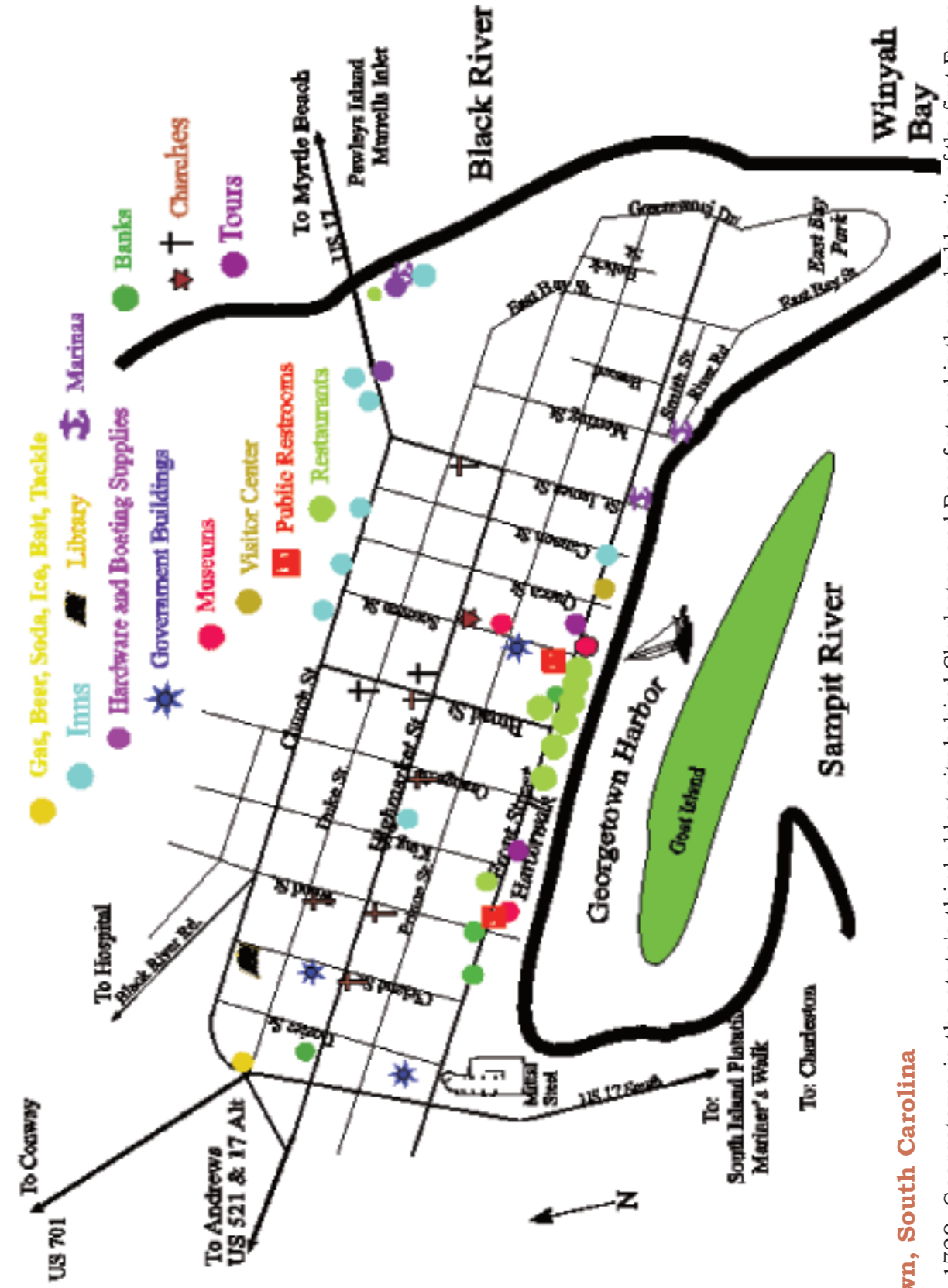


**"South Island Gator"**

*by Phil Wilkinson*

ate a series of 4 duck stamps, starting with "Redheads at Winyah Bay" that is being used this year.

For more details regarding the festival please contact Winyah Bay Heritage Festival, 211 Church Street, Georgetown, South Carolina 29440 Phone: (843) 833-9919. Email: [info@winyahbay.org](mailto:info@winyahbay.org)



### Georgetown, South Carolina

Founded in 1729, Georgetown is the state's third oldest city behind Charleston and Beaufort and is the probable site of the first European settlement in North America in 1526. Situated on a peninsula, Georgetown is surrounded on three sides by water. On the east by Pee Dee, Black and Waccamaw Rivers, on the west by the Sampit River, and on the south by Winyah Bay formed by the convergence of these rivers. The four-by-eight block grid of the historical district is bordered by Wood, Church, Meeting and Front Streets. Front Street is lined with quaint shops and restaurants, many with decks overlooking the harbor. You can take a leisurely stroll along the 12 foot wide, 1,500 foot Harborwalk, tour the antebellum homes, take a boat tour of the bay, or even a walking ghost tour through the city streets. The walking map above indicates some of the places and things to see.

## A Taste of Georgetown

Below is a note on each restaurant in **The Harborwalk**.

**Buzz's Roost**, 715 Front Street: Lunch-Dinner Tuesday through Sunday. Burgers, low country boils, wings and every kind of "dog" you can imagine. Eat inside at the new Captains Quarters or around the rustic open air bar or on the upstairs deck with a view of the harbor. Karaoke or DJ music Friday nights. Live music on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays. At sundown on Fridays and Saturdays, Buzzes sponsors a bagpiper on The Harborwalk to honor our fallen war heros.

**Goat Island Grill (GIG)**, 719 Front Street: Lunch-Dinner seven days a week. The GIG offers low country fare, steaks, pasta, great crab or shrimp bisque, BBQ sandwiches and goat cheese salads. Eat inside or on the deck overlooking the harbor.

**LaRocca** 713 Front Street, Authentic Italian cuisine prepared by owner and chef **Charlie Lalomia**. Veal Scaloppini Chicken Marsala, pasta, steaks, and fresh seafood. Eat in or dine out on the deck on the Harborwalk.

**Revolve Restaurant** 926 - Front Street: Lunch-Thursday-Sunday. Dinner Thursday-Saturday. The best Black River crab cakes, soups, salads, pizza and

pasta. Thursday is theme night with **Chef Dewayne Beaty** serving up menus from different countries along with live jazz. Eat in or on the torch lit patio. Reservations recommended, take out available. Transportation provided to boaters by calling 843 545 1600.

**Rice Paddy Restaurant**, 732 Front Street: Lunch-Dinner Monday through Saturday. The Rice Paddy offers elegant dining in one of Georgetown's most historical buildings. Bahamian grouper, rack of lamb, and filet of beef. From seafood to steaks, the food is second to none. Great socializing at the bar after dinner. Reservations recommended.

**River Room**, 801 Front Street: Lunch - Dinner Monday through Saturday. Sumptuous seafood, steaks, chicken, pasta and lots of it. Enjoy views of the harbor and Harborwalk while dining inside in comfort. **No reservations accepted.**

**Sweeties**, 707 Front St.: Although not a restaurant, Sweeties makes the best chocolate and pecan pralines in the low country. Gourmet chocolates and homemade ice cream. Not even the shops on Market Street in Charleston can match Georgetown's Sweeties.

**Thomas Café**, 703 Front Street: Breakfast and Lunch Monday through Saturday. "Where the Locals Meet" Owner **Ernest Brunson** prepares great home cooked meals with old-fashioned hospitality.

## Georgetown Library Wins National Award

The Georgetown County Library has been named one of 10 recipients of the 2007 National Medal for Museum and Library Service, the nation's highest honor for community service provided by museums and libraries. The annual award, made by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) since 1994, recognizes institutions for outstanding social, educational, environmental, or economic contributions to their communities. This is the first time that a South Carolina institution has ever been given the nation's highest honor for libraries and museums. The library has received congratulations from members of the state's Congressional delegation and will accept its medal, along with a \$10,000 prize, at an upcoming ceremony in Washington, DC.



**SC-CARES** is a local sanctuary that provides a compassionate "no-kill/no-bred" haven for abused, neglected and unwanted exotic animals. It is a 501(c)3 charity and depends on public support through cash, services, and materials. To support and or visit SC-CARES call 843-546-7893.

## National Benjamin Franklin Exhibition at Georgetown County Library

A unique national traveling exhibition “Benjamin Franklin: In Search of a Better World,” is on display at the Georgetown County Library. The 1,000sf exhibit consists of Colonial-era antiques, maps, rare documents, artwork and more. Georgetown will be the only site in South Carolina to host the collection and is the first stop on the national tour. The exhibition, arrived on November 3rd and will continue through January.

Benjamin Franklin began his life as a poor printer’s apprentice and ended as a famous diplomat, inventor, writer and philanthropist. While many know of Franklin’s experiments in electricity, he’s also credited with inventing the bifocal, the flexible catheter, the odometer, decent street lighting and daylight savings time. Not only did he help craft the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution, but he was also a writer of amusing and educational articles under various pen names. His first, “Silence Dogood” when he was only 16, was a series of letters written to the *The New-England Courant* by a middle-aged widow who poked fun at most everything in Massachusetts, from courtship to the educational system. Franklin went on to create a half-dozen other popular pseudonyms during his lifetime. His most famous was that of Richard Saunders, whose clever sayings and advice eventually filled 26 volumes of “Poor Richard’s Almanac.”

Franklin also took up unpopular causes if he felt they were just. Living in England as a colonial diplomat on the eve of the Revolutionary War, he defended the actions of his countrymen, was accused of treason and sent home to the Colonies. As a member of the Constitutional Convention, Franklin fought to have it contain an anti-slavery clause. In the end

he wrote “*I confess, that I do not entirely approve of this Constitution at present, I am not sure I shall ever approve it... I consent, Sir, to this Constitution, because I expect no better, and because I am not sure that it is not the best.*” In 1787, he became the first president of the Pennsylvania Society for the Abolition of Slavery, long before the movement was established.

The exhibition was organized by the Benjamin Franklin Tercentenary of Philadelphia and the American Library Association, with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities. The exhibition draws upon original documents from the American Philosophical Society, The Franklin Institute, the Library Company of Philadelphia, and other museums and libraries and private collectors. Photographs of handwritten and printed documents, objects owned by Franklin, maps, paintings and drawings provide a colorful background for Franklin’s story.

The Georgetown County Library is sponsoring lectures, art contests, a 301st birthday party and more during the exhibit’s stay. Upcoming programs include the following:

December 1, 2:30 PM, Dr. Hal French, “Beyond Religious Fanaticism,” Waccamaw Neck Branch Library

January 8, 2:30 PM, Dr. Leslie Drucker, “Protecting Community Heritage Through Archaeology,” Waccamaw Neck Branch Library

January 17, 6:30 PM, Dr. Daniel Littlefield, “Men of the Revolutionary Generation and their Relationship to Slavery,” Georgetown Library

January 19, 7:00 PM, Dr. Sterling “Skip” Eisinger, “Struck by Lightning: Benjamin Franklin’s Rod to the Omnipotence of God,” Georgetown Library. Please visit [www.gclibrary.org](http://www.gclibrary.org) for details. For other questions, call the library at 843-545-3300.

## CHRYSTMASSE OF OLDE

God rest you, Chrysten gentil men,  
Wherever you may be,—  
God rest you all in fiede or hall,  
Or on ye stormy sea;  
For on this morn oure Chryst is born  
That saveth you and me.

Last night ye shepherds in ye east  
Saw many a wondrous thing;  
Ye sky last night flamed passing bright  
Whiles that ye stars did sing,  
And angels came to bless ye name  
Of Jesus Chryst, oure Kyng.

God rest you, Chrysten gentil men,  
Faring where'er you may;  
In noblesse court do thou no sport,  
In tournament no playe,  
In paynim lands hold thou thy hands  
From bloody works this daye.

But thinking on ye gentil Lord  
That died upon ye tree,  
Let troublings cease and deeds of peace  
Abound in Chrystantie;  
For on this morn ye Chryst is born  
That saveth you and me.

*by Eugene Field*

