

The First Xmas

The idea of the Christmas Tree was brought to Nicodemus in the 1880's. The first one was put up in the Baptist Church the Christmas of 1882. Grant Harris, Henry Johnson, and Beverly Herrin, Deacons brought the tree a cottonwood about six or eight feet tall. The ladies of the church trimmed it. The branches were wrapped with cotton batting. It was placed upright in a small barrel that was covered with a sheet. Bright colors of tissue paper struck here and there on its gave a festive look. The star was made of tin foil taken from tobacco. There was a great number of presents on the tree, both pretty and expensive. Miss Betty Kirtley and Miss Sally Moore each received silver ware. Mrs. Jenny Fletcher, gold ear rings and a dress pin. There were various articles such as lamps, china, linens, many articles of clothing etc. Everyone was so pleased with that method of giving Christmas gifts that ever after a Christmas tree was put up and enjoyed by all. It was the first Christmas tree that the colonists had ever seen and decorated.

Settlers came from far and near to see the tree and enjoy the program of songs and readings.

The First Christmas 1877

Cold weather began in November and continued with wind storms and snow flurries. There was quite a snow before December twenty-fifth. But regardless of disagreeable weather the colonists began to think of Christmas, it had always represented the jolliest time of the whole year. Even in slavery the servants were given a vacation at Christmas time. Everyone looked forward to the joyous Yuletide Season.

At this time there were so many things lacking in the settlement (Nicodemus) that were needed to make a pleasant holiday. Food for a Christmas feast was not to be had. The merchant had very little of anything, and no meat. There would need to be some substitute for the goose, duck, chicken, goat or possum of former days, to make a holiday dinner.