



Davidson in Christmas Past



A page from history....

This advertisement appeared in the December 9, 1914 Davidsonian

D•H•S

The Davidson Historical Society was founded in the late 1980's by a group of concerned citizens led by Taylor and Irene Blackwell. Over the years DHS has presented programs by outstanding local and regional personalities on varying topics as well as touring historically significant sites in the area.

Fill out form, enclose check and mail to:

Davidson Historical Society
PO Box 144
Davidson, NC 28036



Christmas in Davidson



Davidson Historical Society

Christmas 2004

The Davidson Historical Society is pleased to present these reminiscences of long-ago Christmas in Davidson. The articles were excerpted from the Davidson Monthly.

The Davidson Monthly was a student publication- began in 1886, it changed names in the 1890s to the Davidson College Magazine and in the 1920s to Chameleon before fading away. The Monthly was mostly literary essays but each issue had a local column with tidbits of news about the town. The column frequently ran to a page or two.

Our Purpose

The Davidson Historical Society promotes an understanding and appreciation of the history of Davidson, North Carolina and its surrounding area.

Davidson Monthly January 1892, p 140

During the holidays a party of young men who spent their vacation here, and as many of the young ladies of the village went rabbit hunting on horseback. Two rabbits were caught after having been completely frightened to death, and there is no telling how many more might have been

bagged if it had not been that the young gentleman from California fell from his horse and sprained his ankle so badly that further pursuit was entirely out of the question.



Davidson Monthly January 1891, p 111

Christmas was celebrated at Davidson with a great deal more festivity than usual. Very few of the College boys remained, but they say they enjoyed the holidays as much as they could possibly have done had they gone home, notwithstanding the unfavorable report they had received from boys how had spent former holidays here. For whatever pleasure they experienced they are most gratefully indebted to the young ladies of the place. Everybody was eager for a lively time, so on Tuesday night before Xmas all the young people were gathered

at Mrs. Sparrow's to participate in an Apron Party. The name is somewhat significant, but it may need a little explanation. Each young lady took an apron and cravat made of the same material. Each boy drew a cravat and then he hemmed the apron for the donor. Mr. R. S. Cooper won the prize for the best sewing and Mr. J. M. Moore, the prize for the worst. The next night, the Misses Murchison invited several of their friends to tea, after which the evening was spent very pleasantly in games of different kinds. The

...continued on page 2

January 1891 , p 111... *continued from page 1*

next in chronological order was a party at Mrs. Stirewalt's, where a potato race was the chief event of the evening. If any are not quite sure what a potato race is, we refer them to "Billy Wonder." On Friday evening, Mrs. Col. Martin had a number of young people at her house. Before games and other amusements were begun the party were invited into Mrs. Martin's dining room to some refreshments. There is no place where one forgets his timidity and bashfulness so readily as in Mrs. Martin's parlor, so well does she know

how to make one feel at home. The Xmas festivities were ended by a fishing party at Miss Bona Pott's. We will only add that it was probably the most enjoyable of all the holiday parties. If any one wonders what was the nature of the fishing party, we will say that we understand that the ladies are going to give another soon, and will charge twenty-five cents for each fish. The money is to go to a benevolent cause.

**Fruit Cake Recipe**

*Recipe from Mrs. W. J. Martin's handwritten 1888 cookbook.
(Davidson College Archives)*

Fruit Cake (Sister)

Take of flour parched a light brown after it has been sifted 1 lb., 1 lb. sugar- 3/4 lb. Butter- 12 eggs - 2 lbs Raisins after they are stoned - 2 lbs currants--x 1/2 lb Citron - 1/2 lb. Almonds- 1 large wine glass of brandy or wine - 1 teaspoon of each of spice, Cloves & Nutmeg - 1 dessert spoon Molasses. Slice the Citron thru in slices, pour boiling water over the Almonds is blanch then chop fine. Roll the Raisins and Currants in some of the flour to keep them from settling to the bottom of the cake--Mix the flour, sugar, Butter, & Eggs as for any other Cake, put in the spices, Brandy, Molasses, with the grated rind & juice of 7 lemons, then stir in the Raisins & Currants, mixing them well. Put a layer of the batter first in the pan, then a layer of Citron and Almonds over that, then another layer of batter & so on till you have put all in the pan, having the last layer of batter alone. If the batter seems to stiff you can thin it by adding a little more brandy or extract of lemon. I have even used a little water when other things were not convenient. Grease & paper ___ pan as for other cake and bake at the bottom first, put a piece of paper over the top. Bake in a Dutch oven. Takes about 5 hours to bake.



Copy of handwritten recipe

**Davidson Monthly January 1901, p 176**

Owing to the fact that boys were few and far between at Davidson during the holidays, the girls took advantage of the opportunity to make themselves mistresses of ceremonies. Besides overrunning the room of a helpless inmate by the name of Gourdin, it is reported that late one night two bold young ladies knocked at the door where a certain young man by the name of Spencer was known to be, and demanded his presence. With trembling foot-steps he approached, and when, lo and behold! they presented him with a box of that sweet thing called candy. In the language of another we think "the girls must have courted the boys here Christmas." However, things have quieted down and matters are running their usual course since the boys have charge again.

Join Us in Preserving Local History**Become a Supporting Member of the Davidson Historical Society!**

Your support will help DHS with its projects and programs that preserves the past.

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2004-2005 Supporting Membership
in the Davidson Historical Society:

\$10—Individual Membership

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See other side for mailing instructions