

FATHER XMAS ARRIVES EARLY

As a flag-decked state barge comes up the river children of Shrewsbury gaze in wonder as Father Christmas steps ashore at the Quarry. That's not the way he's supposed to come. They look doubtful, too, as he climbs into his sleigh. He's using shetland ponies because lately there's been so much rain, dear! The distinguished visitor from Toyland is the guest of the local Chamber of Commerce. He's a bit early for Christmas, of course, but it's probably just a routine check up.

One of the oldest towns in the country, Shrewsbury's streets make a fitting background as Father Christmas drives through the town, and as always he looks after those who most deserve his attentions first. And this is obviously just what the doctor ordered ... just the thing to get a fellow fit quickly.

If you're not sure whether you've been good enough, there's still time to put things right. In the meantime, Father Christmas has a lot more places to visit, so it's "so long, Shrewsbury." See you on the Christmas Tree.