



Percy Plays Santa

—James Tate, '48

Troop 13 of Glenford, New York, was a thriving organization. As Christmas rolls around, the boys plan to help the firemen of the city deliver the toys which were donated by the people and repaired by the firemen. There were lots of toys but not quite enough to go around to all of the needy children.

On Christmas eve morning the thirty scouts of the troop gather at the scout hut to prepare to deliver the toys. Sammy Lock speaks to the scoutmaster, "Everybody is here except Percy Smythe."

Percy was the twelve-year-old son of John Quincy Howard Smythe, the wealthy mill-owner. This family lives in a house, which has a high fence around it, near the center of the town. Few people were allowed to enter.

Fifteen minutes later Percy comes up walking very slowly. Spud Taylor runs to meet him and to hurry him up a bit. "Hi, Spud yells.

"Hey," said Percy rather dejectedly. "Haven't you all gone yet?"

"Naw, we were waiting for you," Spud nappily announced, "so you could be paired off with me."

Everyone marched down to the fire station and jabbered all the way about where they had to go to deliver the toys.

Percy walked along rather quietly, thinking. He didn't understand why all the enthusiasm about going to deliver a few toys to those kids whom he looked down upon. Pretty soon the group reached the fire station, received their toys, and were off on the trip assigned to them. Spud and Percy were given two red wagons with a number of toys and an address of the home they were to visit. Spud whistled and jabbered as they walked along the street toward the home of the O'Briens. Percy remained disinterested.

They walked up to the O'Brien house, and Spud proudly knocked on the door. The door was opened by a thin, smiling girl. Spud cheerfully explained their mission. She stepped back to allow them to enter.

They found there were six children who were all pleasantly surprised. When the girl who opened the door received a present, she joyously hugged Percy. Percy blushed a deep, crimson red.

Amid all the excitement, the mother lifted her hand, and quietness immediately fell over the group. The mother bowed her head and prayed, "God bless these boys. Let them bring happiness to many others. This is surely one of Thy miracles. We thank Thee in Jesus' name. Amen."

A tear found its way to Percy's eye. He realized what it meant to give to the poor. When they left, Percy spoke up, "Let's go to my house."

Spud didn't understand, but he followed. On arriving at his home, Percy went straight to his room, unlocked a closet, and beckoned Spud to look in to it. There was a closet full of toys which he had hardly used. Percy asked, "Will you help me deliver these? Now that I understand why it is a greater joy to give than to receive, I want to get rid of these. But I don't know any of those needy kids."

Spud was stupefied. "Sure, I'll help ya," he stammered; "we'll get a list from the firemen of those people who were missed."

While Spud was calling the fire department, Percy was busy packing the toys carefully into boxes making ready to deliver them. He whistled while he worked, and his heart was the lightest it had ever been in the twelve pampered years that he could remember.



Christmas Everywhere

—Martha Harbinson, '48

We are all aware of the kind of Christmas we have, but have we ever thought about how people in other places spend their Christmas?

In far off Alaska, traditionally known as the home of Santa Claus, they have so much snow they have to dig themselves out to get out of the house. Regardless of the snow and temperature, Christmas is Christmas so long as the spirit prevails.

From Mexico we find the Pinata party as a part of the Christmas celebration. The Pinata is a pottery jar filled with goodies covered with gay colors. It is fastened to the end of a rope and hangs high overhead. While someone lowers and lifts it, the children try to hit it and break it. When the Pinata is broken, everyone scrambles for the goodies. However, the Christmas spirit is the same in Mexico as right here.

If we were to take a look in on Christmas over in Europe, what do you suppose we would find? Probably small children barefooted with very little clothing would be huddled around a fire made very small by a few sticks of wood. Perhaps they will receive a crumb of bread for a present. What have they to give? Even though they have not a third of what we have, they give thanks for being alive. What can we do for them? We can spend an unselfish Christmas; and when we go to the services on Christmas, let them mean more than just a tradition. We should pray for them as we never have before. In our homes we should realize how very fortunate we are, no matter how little or how much we might have.

How will you spend your Christmas?

It's Still Christmas To Me

—Lewis Tesh, '48

"Christmas comes but once a year," and, as some half-wit has put it, "Thank goodness it comes only once a year." When I was a little boy, Christmas could never come too fast to suit me. It meant Santa Claus, and presents, and helping decorate the tree. Now that I am older, Christmas has a slightly different meaning, but I still get a kick out of seeing it come every year.

Many people complain because they must buy so many presents at Christmas. They forget that one need not have a large income to have a good Christmas. Small gifts, when given sincerely and from the heart, mean more than expensive ones that are given just for show.

Another part of Christmas that I like is the carols. The boy or girl who hasn't gone caroling on Christmas Eve has certainly missed something.

Christmas this year will be mostly for my little brother. He believes in Santa like I believe in eating. When I see him gleefully opening his presents on Christmas morning, talking and yelling all at once, I shall see myself in his place, only fifteen short years ago, and although in another sense, it's still Christmas to me.



O'Hara's Christmas

—Doug Craven, '48

PART I

It was Christmas, and the gay crowd moved rapidly with their bundles piled high in their arms and joyous smiles on their faces, but not so with one George O'Hara. His hands were thrust deep in his pockets, and instead of an armful of bundles, there in his shabby coat pocket was one solitary, withered orange—one little orange to remind three small children that it was Christmas.

As he walked slowly down the gayly lighted streets, one thought was on his mind; how can one explain to three small children that he couldn't find a job and that they were only hanging up their stockings in vain? Three trusting children awaiting the arrival of Santa Claus should not be disillusioned.

He thought of their gayly smiling children pouring out their Christmas wishes come true, and his throat tightened and his eyes stung. His feet grew tired, and he could barely place one in front of another; so he set down, right there on the curb, unconscious of the glances of the crowd.

As time passed the crowd began to dwindle, and George rose and started home, with head down. As he walked unseeingly, he moved slightly to the right, thus making an abrupt meeting with a store window. As he looked up, there before him were the toys that his children dreamed of. He looked around—no one in sight—and then deep inside a voice cried, "Thou shalt not steal,"—but in his mind was the picture of three small children.

Down came his fist, and the night's quietude was shattered by the sound of breaking glass. He grabbed quickly and ran down the well lighted street, his legs carrying him on through the outskirts of the city, past fine apartments, shabby buildings, across the tracks, toward the broken shacks, and home—at last home!

PART II

"Sergeant O'Brien, some one to see you, a fellow Wilburt T. Van Hooley or something; wants to report a robbery; says some tramp robbed Stein's store window; says he was in his place early this morning looking for a job; a fellow named O'Hara — George O'Hara, I believe."

"O. K.; take a couple of boys and go pick 'em up—"

The squad car sped down the street and headed for the "lower end". "A pity it is to go a-picking up a man on Christmas Eve, but he shouldn't 'ave gone a robbing, either, I guess."

"Well 'er it is."

The car stopped, and two policemen slowly and quietly ascended the walk toward the little shack. They crept on the porch without a sound and peeped in the window.

And there on the floor they saw three small children clutching their Christmas toys and laughing, while farther back, kneeling by a shabby bed, were a man and his wife, dressed in threadbare clothes, asking God for forgiveness.

The burly cop turned and nudged his comrade. Together they walked silently toward the car and drove away.



Santa Junior

Edgar Swing, '48

Once upon a time, long ago and far away, there was a son born to Mr. and Mrs. S. Nicholas Claus. The proud parents named this fine son Santa Nicholas, after his old man.

At that time Mr. and Mrs. Claus were living in the midst of a depression. Mr. Claus was not working and had not worked for a number of years, the lazy bum. They were very poor and did not have enough to eat because Mr. Claus had taken all the red and blue stamps from their ration books and traded them for beer.

Then it came; their landlord gave them orders to pay their rent or get out. So Mr. and Mrs. Claus and little Santa, who was only three weeks old, were forced to move from their little dirty, tumbled-down shack out into the cold, icy winter.

The little Claus family was heart-broken. They packed all their belongings into a beer case and set out to find a home, but no home was to be found. Mr. Claus decided to find out for himself what work was like, so he set forth to find a job. The only job available was one for a painter whose work it would be to paint the North Pole annually. Mr. Claus needed money so badly that he and his poor, helpless family journeyed forth into the land of penguins and polar bears for a life of hard, cruel labor.

The years flew by quickly, and soon Santa was a fine, husky lad of twenty-one. He was three hundred and ten pounds of solid fat.

As time kept flying by, and Santa kept growing older and fatter, Mr. and Mrs. Claus became very old also. One day while Mr. Claus was up on the very top of the pole painting it, he slipped and fell into the snow and was never seen again.

Soon after Mr. Claus' tragedy, Mrs. Claus ran away and married a polar bear of which she was very fond. So this left poor Santa all by himself. He soon became very lonesome so he began to make toys to pass the time away. He decided it would be fun to make toys and give them to all the little children in the world. When the next issue of the "Rears and Saw-buck" catalog arrived, he ordered a beautiful sleigh with little bells all over it. Then he sent ten cents and a box top to the Moldy Munchies Cereal Company and in return received eight tiny raindeer.

So on the night of December 24, old Santa packed his sleigh with toys, put on his best pair of red flannels, and set out to deliver the toys to all the little boys and girls. All the kiddies have grown to love this grand old tub of lard and look forward with a great deal of anticipation and joy to his visit every year.

As they entered the station door, the Sergeant demanded, "Well, where is 'e?"

The big cop just turned and growled. "False alarm. Van Hooney must be nuts."