

'Twas the Night Before Christmas

When all through the house
Not a creature was stirring,
Not even a mouse;



Community Santa Claus

By Alice B. Palmer



THE gigantic Christmas tree in Fountain square was ablaze with colored lights and decorations. Christmas eve had arrived and the snowy atmosphere was beautifully depositing the finishing touches to the grand and wonderful community tree. Even though all the celebrations had taken place elsewhere the big tree had never failed to stand in its place of honor in the center of town on Christmas eve.

Mirth, happiness and laughter fairly abounded through the joyous Christmas crowds as they thronged the streets blinking through the snowflakes and hurrying on to celebrations. They seemed to take the community tree for granted until the illustrious sound of sleighbells was heard in the distance. Sleighbells on Christmas eve—how delectable! All eyes were turned in the direction from which they came.

Soon the object of the delightful disturbance came into sight. A bright red sleigh drawn by six horses, cleverly decorated to represent reindeers, turned the corner and headed toward Fountain square. All traffic was stopped



Instantly as the children made a frantic rush to meet their Santa—the real Santa Claus from the North pole!

"It must be the real one," shouted one little fellow, "for only the really true one has reindeers. I know, 'cause my mother told me so."

Midst wild shouts of merriment Santa, himself, in his bright red and white costume and long white beard, alighted from the sleigh with a jovial, good-natured, "Merry Christmas, merry Christmas to you all!" The children swarmed about him in uncontrollable confusion as he joyously dragged forth pack after pack bulging with bright colored toys and dolls of all descriptions.

What could it mean? Who was this strange real Santa Claus with sleigh and reindeers from the North pole? The people marvelled! The children were boisterous and completely out of control. Everyone forgot his own particular celebration and lingered on to see what it was all about.

Then jolly old St. Nick, his beard flowing in the breeze, began digging down into his packs and passing out the toys to the youngsters.

"Oh, boy!" shouted one, "see what I got—an airplane." Then two little girls cried out, joyously, as they unwrapped golden-haired dollies.

On and on Santa continued as the crowd became greater and greater and the snowstorm grew heavier and heavier. Santa's packs seemed to be endless. Soon gay colored balloons, drums, harmonicas and gold and silver horns were in evidence on all sides, adding to the gaiety of the Christmas party.

There was a lull as Santa Claus dug down into still another pack. This time he began hurling large oranges and sacks of candy into the crowd and they were catching them 'midst much laughter and excitement.

Santa himself was having the time of his life. Even more so, than the happy crowd about him. For he was



chuckling within, because he had been reminded by a Christmas messenger of love to do this very thing and to become the community Santa Claus.

Finally the crowd became impatient to learn who their strange, chuckling Santa really was. Who could it be, who had given so generously and impartially to all? But before they had time to speak, the jolly old fellow was jostling past people, snow and traffic until he scrambled into his sleigh.

"Get up, reindeers!" he shouted. "With a jerk the sleigh bounded forward with Santa wildly shouting, 'Merry Christmas, folks, merry Christmas to all!'"

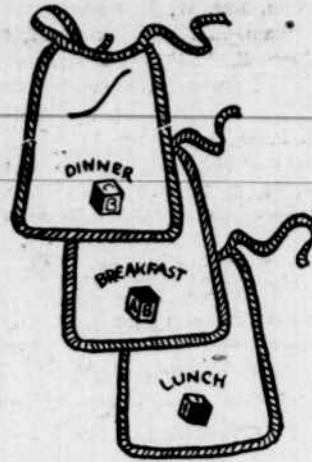
But he wasn't to get away so easily for the next moment a strong north wind, whistling around the corner, tore off whiskers, mask and all, and Santa Claus stood revealed in all his embarrassment!

A hushed silence at first and then a wild shout of joy and surprise rang through the Christmas atmosphere. "Twas 'Indian Pete,' the town's most confirmed miser. Never in all their lives had they seen such a glorious smile on his face, as he gazed out from his Christmas regalia and offered his hand in friendly greeting to all.

"Indian Pete" (so named because of his love for the outdoor life), had given without thought of receiving; and had incidentally received more than he ever could have received materially—the respect and adoration of the whole town.

Simple Set of Bibs For the Little One

By GRANDMOTHER CLARK



Plenty of bibs must always be handy for the little one and a mother is always ready to make up a few more if they cost as little as these do and also require a little handwork.

This package No. A-4 contains a set of three bibs stamped with designs like shown above on a fine quality heavy sheeting. Binding and thread are not included. The embroidery is in simple outline stitch. Send 15 cents to our stamped goods department and receive this set by mail.

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Most precious garment in the world, containing no gold or jewelry, is a feather cape in the Bishop museum, Honolulu, one of the most interesting institutions of its kind in the United States. The cape is valued at \$1,000,000. It is made from the feathers of birds now extinct, and was worn only by old Hawaiian royalty.

Jumping Tower Popular in Air-Minded Russia

Parachute jumping has become a very popular sport and there is a jumping tower in the Park of Culture and Rest in Moscow where, you may learn to get over your first fears. The peak of the parachute is tied to a cable, which runs out as you fall.

The cost is a few kopeks a jump and the Moscow boys and girls line up and jostle one another off the hundred-foot parapet nearly all day and throughout the evening, too. This craze is symbolized by the lighting at the Cafe Sport on Gorky street—a lamp in the form of an airman with a parachute shade.

Empty Plattitudes

The funniest thing is a pompous platitude which doesn't mean anything.

AND GET WET
"Some people who try to get in the swim, merely get into hot water."



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Late Christmas Dinner

by Gertrude H. Walton

IMPATIENTLY Louise shoved the steaming pans and kettles into the warming oven. Looking down the driveway as she had done for almost two hours, she exclaimed:

"Of course Horton called that he might be late. But what is keeping sister and Hal, and Aunt Jen, Uncle Jim, Betty and Clyde? Six people invited to a Christmas dinner and all of them late! Accident? Surely not all of them in a heap along the roadside unless each bumped into the other hurrying because they are late to our dinner!" Louise was smiling even before a honk sent her outside.

"Horton, please drive me to Larion crossroads. Maybe we'll meet sister



"Drive Me to Larion Crossroads. Maybe We Will Meet Sister."

and Hal. Maybe they will know why the others are delayed. Sort of a news center at the crossroads, anyway."

"Pshaw! Don't worry. They probably think you will not have dinner promptly at 1 o'clock—"

"But I told each one that we would have dinner promptly because I thought you boys might wish to hear the program at Baxter. Do you suppose they have all gone to the festival before coming here?"

"That's it, exactly! Let's go, too! Then we can all come home together to a grand Christmas reunion dinner," Horton interrupted.

"Come home to cold turkey, dressing, and potatoes reunion dinner, you mean," Louise snapped.

Hurrying home and eating lunch, Horton, with Louise a bit reluctant, started for Baxter, where a special festival of Christmas music and drama, an annual community affair, for many years, between rival towns, would be presented at the Community Center playhouse. Prizes were awarded to best productions from the two towns.

"The guests must have misunderstood my letter. Whatever it is, they have all 'misunderstood together,' Louise whined during applauding for the Edgewood performers in which Horton blustered his hands, clapping for his home community.

He seemed unsympathetic to Louise's further peevish questions:

"But not one of our guests are here that I can see. Do you glimpse Uncle's bald head, or sister's fur, or Betty's

His First Christmas

by Earle Hooker Eaton

RING up the Pole and telephone Without a moment's pause, Or by the wireless make it known To dear old Santa Claus, That Papa's Boy and Mama's Joy, And Sister's Precious Mite, While glad bells clang will gaily hang His stocking up tonight!

"Ting-ling! Ting-ling! Hello, hello! Is that you Santa, dear? Be sure your reindeer hear your 'Whoa!' When you are passing here. What's that? You'll come and bring a drum, A jumping-jack and ball, And other toys for little boys? Dear Saint, you're best of all!"

'Tis Christmas morn, and to his shop Old Santa homeward flies; 'Tis five o'clock, but open pop The baby's roguish eyes. We're dead for sleep, but out we creep, And dress at once to get What Santa kind, has left behind For Toddlekins, our pet.

From Pole to Pole there's surely not A babe more pleased than he, And how he crows, the happy tot, And gurgles in his glee. The jumping-jack, the ducks that quack, The drum, the horns, the ball, The chicks that peep, the horse, the sheep, He tries to eat them all!

On this his first glad Christmas lark, The toys with blocks he pelts, He makes old Noah wish the Ark Had landed somewhere else! A soldier blue he breaks in two, A puncture gives the drum, He fills the air with legs and hair, And then—he sucks his thumb!

The Sand-Man's surely come to town, And soft is mummy's lap; Clear up the wreck and snuggle down, 'Tis time to take a nap. Then rock-a-bye, close each blue eye, Rest, my darling, rest! (He's fast asleep, with baby sheep Hugged tight against his breast!) © Western Newspaper Union.

After the program Horton and Louise watched every means of exit for their guests, then hurried home, arriving at five o'clock. At sight of the left-over dinner, Louise sobbed:

"Never saw such a frost. What on Adam's earth could have happened? What have we—have I done to deserve such snubs?" She was almost suspicious that Horton had something to do with the absence of their guests. She leaped to the jangling of the telephone. Anything was better than silence—or was it?

"Ye—yes—yes—we'll be there—at once!" The receiver clicked.

"Horton, hurry. Someone needs you—at Herald's Corners. Hal called. No, Hal and sister are not hurt, but someone else. You run on and I'll stay to prepare beds."

Horton, Hal, and Louise's sister soon arrived with a man, woman, and small child who had been buried under an automobile after being struck by a hit-and-run driver. When Hal found them, hours before, they were unconscious. After return to consciousness the doctor had consented for Hal to drive them to Horton's for the night, as no hospital was nearer than one hundred miles.

While administering to the injured ones in the spotless beds Louise provided, Uncle Jim and Aunt Jen arrived with Betty and Clyde, son and

daughter-in-law, at exactly six o'clock! "We were determined to be on time for dinner," Aunt Jen called innocently.

"Yes, you are in time—to help nurse these injured strangers," Louise answered, trying not to look discomfited.

"Jim had too bad a cold to go to the program at Baxter. So Clyde said he would drive our car and we would all come together. Clyde could not get away from the store until noon. We thought you would probably go to the program if we were not here to hinder during the afternoon. And we'd get here in time for your six o'clock dinner. Let us help make these injured



"Yes, You Are in Time—to Help Nurse These Injured Strangers."

ones comfortable. Or, we'll get the dinner on the table while you attend them," Aunt Jen rattled on.

"The date of the dinner's coldness seemed not to matter. One thing I've learned, that a cold dinner is no less palatable after eight hours, than 'for two hours' wait. It's all because of two times—two dates for dinner—12 o'clock—and six o'clock! Two things learned today!" Louise recited to herself the text of the letter sent to her guests, and as nearly as she could remember it was worded:

"Can you come for Christmas dinner? Come early if the men wish to go with Horton to the program at Baxter. We women will gossip the afternoon away until the men return. Dinner promptly then!"

"Dinner at six—for six late: guests! But it all turned out right. The poor people were rescued by Hal's coming in the afternoon. Hal said that since he had the afternoon for driving he would leisurely drive by way of Herald's Corners to see the new viaduct just completed. You and I, dear, attended the program together. Uncle Jim needed a driver. Next time I'll make it plain which dinner hour to expect my guests—at one o'clock or at six o'clock on Christmas!" Louise smiled the next day after the injured strangers were on their way, and the guests had returned to their homes.

ON HIS WAY



Green—Going away this Christmas! Wise—No, but I guess I'll go away right after Christmas. Green—Where to? Wise—To jail as a bad debtor.

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