



# Santa and the COWBOY

AP Newsfeatures

By LUCRECE HUDGINS



Chapter One

## SANTA AND THE COWBOY

Once upon a time there lived a little boy named George Harold Sanders. His mother called him Georgia and his father called him son. But he called himself Kid Buckaroo, the Terror of the West. If you were his friend he would let you call him Bucky.

He was a cowboy. He lived in an apartment house in a big city 2000 miles away from the wide open west. He rode the subway to and from school. He played in the city park. He had never touched a cow, never been on a ranch, never ridden a horse.

All the same he was a cowboy. To be truthful, you'd have to say he imagined he was a cowboy. But it's all the same thing.

He dressed in jeans and checkered shirt. He carried two six-shooters, one on each hip. A short and ragged lasso hung from his belt. His red hat dipped over his forehead. He usually carried a stick which he constantly patted. The stick, of course, was his trusty horse Fellow.

Every Saturday and Sunday Bucky rode Fellow over to the park where there were a lot of other cowboys—real like himself and a lot of Indians, too—though the Indians were wholly make-believe.

And that was the Great Sorrow of Kid Buckaroo's life: that there were no more honest-to-goodness, war-painted, whooping, fighting Indians left in the world.

"All the Indians we have now are good ones," his father told him.

"Don't they ever fight cowboys anymore?" asked Bucky.

"No, they are our friends. And cowboys spend their time riding herd, and branding cattle, and getting beef to market."

Well, that's not the way Kid Buckaroo spent his time. He chased Indians. He tracked them down the main avenues of the city, ambushed them in elevators, captured whole tribes with his two six-shooters.

"I don't know what to do with him," moaned his mother. "Goodness, I only hope his baby sister doesn't grow up to be a cowgirl!"

"Maybe we can get him something for Christmas to get his mind off cowboys," suggested his



Bucky rode Fellow over to the park where there were a lot of Indians...make believe Indians.

father. Presently Bucky galloped in on Fellow. "Feel my muscle, Dad," he said. He held up his skinny seven-year-old arm.

"That's great," said his father. "You're very healthy."

"I'm the strongest cowboy in the world," said Bucky.

"Son," said his father, "Christmas is coming pretty soon. What would you like Santa to bring you?"

Bucky sat down and thought for a while. Then he said, "I've got everything, I guess. Pistols, horse, lasso—there's really not much else."

"How about a baseball and bat?" said his father.

Bucky shook his head. "I'd never use it."

"Well, a football? Or a set of drums? Or some lead soldiers?"

Bucky took a bead on the living room light with his gun.

"Honestly, Dad,— what would a cowboy be doing with that kind of stuff?"

"But there must be something," said his father. "Santa can bring you most anything you want, you know. You think of something and write it down. You'd be surprised at what Santa could do for you."

Bucky went in his room and put Fellow in his stable under the bed. He hung his guns on the closet door and pulled off his boots.

He sat on the bed twirling his lasso. All the time he was thinking. A great big wonderful idea was growing in his mind until finally he was just about ready to burst with excitement.

Mis father said Santa could bring him most anything and that was certainly true because in other years Santa had brought him everything he could think to ask for, even including the time he'd ask-

ed for a baby sister. "Golly!" he thought as he rushed to his desk for paper and pencil. "Wait'll the kids see what I turn up with on Christmas morning!" Then he sat down and carefully wrote his letter to Santa. This is what he said: "Dear Santa, I'd be so happy forever if you'd please bring me some real live Indians to fight." And he signed the letter "Kid Buckaroo, Terror of the West."

Now, parents have to read letters to Santa before they mail them to be sure there are no misspelled words. So Bucky's father read his letter. "Good heavens!" he exclaimed. "All he wants for Christmas are some Indians to fight?"

"Mercy!" cried Bucky's mother. "Whatever shall we do?"

"I don't know. Maybe I better dress up like an Indian Chief. But one thing is certain—here's one letter that will never reach Santa Claus, thank goodness!"

He tossed the letter into the waste basket. But what strange things happened to that letter!

The next morning the waste basket was emptied by the trash man and taken away in a big truck. As the truck rumbled through the streets, the wind loosened the paper and blew it onto the sidewalk.

A man walking to work kicked the paper into an alley. There a small boy snatched it, wadded it up and batted it across the street like a ping pong ball.

This time it landed right at the feet of Mortimer Moonface who was sitting on the curbstone resting. Few people could see Mortimer because he was a brownie. He was on his way home from the bakery where he worked putting holes in doughnuts.

I guess you know that fairies and elves and such are not just creatures to be found in forests and books. No, indeed. Every city is filled with them—tiny men and women, not six inches tall, making a living in the city just like everyone else.

Now Mortimer Moonface carried a wee loaf of bread under his arm. When he saw the crumpled paper at his feet he picked it up and wrapped it around the bread to keep it clean. When he reached home (behind the face of the big City Hall clock) Mrs. Moonface unwrapped the bread. As she did so she cried out, "Why—Santa's name is written here!"

"So it is," said Mortimer, peering over her shoulder. "Let's see. It says 'Dear Santa, I'd be so happy forever if you'd please bring me some real live Indians to fight. Kid Buckaroo, Terror of the West.'"

## Allens Creek Float, Girls Rated High



Allens Creek folks used the flower theme with these two pretty girls for their float in the 1949 Tobacco Harvest Festival parade. In foreground is Miss Vivian Gilliland.

"Say!" cried Mrs. Moonface. "Wasn't Herbert telling us something about Indians in Santa Land last week?"

(Herbert, a brownie who worked on a newspaper, knew about everything that went on in the whole world.)

"That was Jindians," remembered Mortimer. "But Indians and Jindians are probably the same thing. Anyway, if Santa is having trouble I should think he needs some big strong fellow like this Kid Buckaroo to help him. I'm going to write Kid Buckaroo a letter. Look, his address is right on here."

When Kid Buckaroo (known as Bucky) went to the mail box he

found a letter for himself that said: "Dear Mr. Buckaroo, Santa is having trouble with real live fighting Indians in Santa Land and he could sure use your help. Mortimer Moonface."

Bucky's heart thundered with excitement. So there were some fighting Indians left in the world! And in Santa Land of all places. Why, Santa's very life was probably in danger!

A cowboy certainly knew what he had to do. He belted on his two six-shooters, yanked his faithful stick horse from under the bed and grabbed his lasso. "Don't worry, Santa," he whispered. "Kid Buckaroo is on the

way!" Of course Bucky wasn't afraid of going to Santa Land. The only trouble was he had not the slightest idea how to get to it. "It's North, I'm certain," he told himself. But where was north? He rode his stick horse, Fellow, down the sidewalks of his neighborhood until he found a sign saying: "Take North Bound Buses Here."

When a bus rolled to the curb Bucky hopped aboard. Away the bus went round and about the city to places Bucky never had gone before. Presently the driver called Bucky up and said, "Where's your fare?"

Bucky's mouth fell open. "I don't have any money," he whispered.

The driver stopped the bus and put Bucky off. There he was—surrounded by skyscrapers, the traffic spinning past him. He felt a million miles from home and yet was certainly not very near Santa Land.

He asked a newsboy the way to Santa Land. The boy growled, "Scram!" He asked a lady if she knew the way. She said, "You dear boy, are you all ready for

Christmas?" He asked a cleaner who said, "Why, Santa Land? You can see any department store."

Bucky was tired, almost ready to cry when he came down on a bench. A tiny little man ran up and grabbed your finger. "I—oh, I'm stammered. But you're the man. 'Little Tiny' are you?"

"I'm Kid Buckaroo," said in a rather forlorn voice. "Why," exclaimed Tiny, "be that you are the Terror of the West?"

"How did you know?" Bucky in astonishment. "I heard my friend, Moonface, talking about you last night. He said you were a fight Jindians or Indians or something in Santa Land."

Bucky's eyes sparkled. "That's—if I can ever see you!" "Then considered for a moment. Then he said, 'Mr. Buckaroo, (Continued on Page 3)

## THE OLD HOME TOWN



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