

## Who Are We Now? . . .

Who are we now? Have we changed in any way during the years or months that we have been at Salem?

Knowledge has changed us . . . We have changed! Through the study of science we have learned that our world is an ordered one with laws to govern it. We have realized the vastness of the universe and our own insignificance in comparison. Through the study of history we have discovered the necessity of governing well such a world. In spite of our insignificance, we have learned the part that man plays in the course of events. Through the study of religion we have found the Power from which comes our own power to enable us to do these things.

Great characters of the past have changed us . . . In philosophy and theology we have come upon such characters as Plato, Augustine, Calvin, Descartes, Locke, Marx—people who, either by our agreement or disagreement with them have added and given strength to our own beliefs. Ideas of men of literature, too—Milton, Shakespeare, Goethe, Sartre, Joyce—we have absorbed and made a part of our lives. They have given us new methods of expressing ourselves. Great historical characters, whether they be Napoleons, Elizabeths or Lincolns, have given us ideals by which to shape our lives.

Teachers have changed us . . . They are the ones who present the knowledge and the ideas to us. It is the same knowledge, the same ideas, but with each person the interpretation is different. So we are confronted not only with our interpretation, but with that of Dr. Singer, Miss Byrd, Dr. Welch, Dr. Lewis and all the rest. One puts the emphasis here, another, there. And we take all of it, put it together, and arrive at another self.

Other students have changed us . . . We have learned that people from Texas and New York are fundamentally the same as we. More important still, we have learned this about the people from France, Germany, Finland, Austria and Holland. We have learned further that in spite of the sameness, there are differences, and those differences which we liked we have tried, perhaps unconsciously, to make likeness. New environment has brought new ideas, new expressions, which we adopt or discard. We have gained understanding of why our friends act as they do, and thus understanding of our own feelings and actions.

Who are we now? We are ourselves, undeniably, for there is nobody else like us. But we are new selves because of other people. We are a part of the past, a part of the present. And this new, broader self enables us to become a useful part of the future.

## The Salemite



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## Christmas In Provence

By Guillemette Roussel

The atmosphere of a Christmas celebration in Provence is extraordinary. In this old French province on the Mediterranean coast the people have very strictly kept the ancient traditions. They use to play—in fact they really live—the story of "Noel" with a wonderful simplicity and devotion of spirit. Christmas Eve is clear. The keen mountain air smells of snow; the whole village, actors and audience together, is making its way through ancient, narrow streets to the twelfth-century church. Open doors and lighted windows give glimpses of shepherdesses arranging their "fichus", of angels having their hair arranged by their mothers, while church bells clamor through the night.

Near the church the "creche" is installed, set out in traditional manners with real actors.

An altar bell is rung, an Ave is sung, and the choir of angels suddenly bursts forth from one knows not where. Then silence. Deep, waiting silence, fired with expectancy. From a side of the chapel a moving light is seen; St. Joseph comes forth, leading a young and weary virgin. Dim lights throughout the building denote the closed windows of "mas" and cottages. In front of each stands the householder, wondering who has awakened him, who these may be who travel so late through the wintry night.

The Innkeeper wears his night-shirt and a night cap; according to his traditional role he is as crusty as an innkeeper may be. The conversation between himself and St. Joseph is carried on in song; then he sends off the tired couple roughly. So they seek the shelter offered by a stable which becomes the birthplace of the Infant Saviour.

After this, all becomes marvelous. When the angels' voices, shrill and soulless, suddenly ring out from unseen nooks about the church, everyone looks upward, every heart beats quicker, all is marvelous. And from every corner a shepherd's voice replies. This heavenly-human dialogue goes on for hours. Angels, of course, sing in Latin, shepherds in Provençal.

The crib is situated in an open-

sided stable. Behind rises a green hill. Paths lead down to the stable and on these paths the humble folks of Provence hurry to adore "le petit enfant Jesus."

An old woman on her donkey rides down claspng a great country loaf as big as a wheel, while a young mother, carrying her baby in a wooden cradle on her head, swings downhill with the unimpeachable bearing of a peasant accustomed to headloads; a granny, in her hand the sticks she has been gathering to warm the Child; another with eggs in a bucket; another spinning wool as she ambles along on donkeyback; another woman driving a couple of turkeys; a seller of nougat; an orange seller.

Then the village "tambourinaire", without whom no gathering is complete, arrives to play some of his store of tunes to amuse the new born babe. He wears the musician's traditional dress, short coat, broad hat and white leggings.

The Biblical characters begin, of course, with the shepherds. They kneel near the crib, their sheep lying about them. The head shepherd carries a lamb which has on its head a little wheel stuck with five candles; the second shepherd leads a ram decorated with candles and flowers, and is accompanied by children all dressed up as little St. Johns.

Rams are selected and their wool washed and painted in colors; ribbons are woven about their heads and lighted candles fixed to their horns. These sires of the flock are brought to kneel before the creche.

Under the sheltered roof, the Virgin kneels by the crib, a very conventional young virgin; St. Joseph stands as conventionally behind, while the two beasts complete the group.

All are assembled before the creche. A spokesman greets the Child; a final chorus salutes the Holy Family and, in true medieval manner, the actors make a vow. They solemnly undertake to perform their Pastorale again in the future with an engagement to compose new verses during the interval. After the vow is made, the congregation comes into the dim old church where it composes itself for Midnight Mass.

## Baby Sitting

By Hadwig Stolwitzer

Have you ever seen a princess in her bed chamber? No? You should see Mit. The royal air with which she dismisses me after I have helped her unbutton her dress, saying with a wave of her hand: You can go now. Of course I must come in again some minutes later to tell her goodnight. By then she usually has already nearly dozed off.

I had never dreamt to pass a Christmas vacation in an American family, playing with the children. If anyone had told me this a year ago I would have thought he had gone nutty. When I first heard about it I was a little skeptical. What would American children be like? Were they going to be extremely self-assured or extremely shy of a stranger.

Actually they were neither. And compared to European children they have one great asset: They are much more self-reliant. Just look at Mit. She is six years old, but she is really nearly grown up already. (At least she thinks so.)

Of course she has a boyfriend. She has picked him because he has such handsome teeth. He rides with her in the same school bus every morning. Unfortunately the friendship has not gotten beyond the stage of distant admiration yet. She has only talked to him once, over the telephone, when he could not make out who she was.

The next oldest is T. He is eight. His hobby is large game hunting. The other day he spotted an owl in the backyard. I was very excited when he offered to take me on the hunting trip with him. Even though at that particular moment I was wearing my best dress and nylon stockings, I decided to go at once.

I was the kuli and carried an old skipping rope and a gray paper

bag. We were going to lasso the owl first and then put the paper bag over her head. We stalked the owl carefully. I was nearly flat on my stomach with my best dress on. Unfortunately the owl was gone when we at last arrived in the back yard.

K. is the eldest. Her hobby is cooking. So we decided to make sweets. The preparations were long and complicated. We had to get nuts, evaporated milk and all kinds of sugar. Then we had to cook it to a soft ball stage. So we kept dropping the sticky mess into a glass of water to see if we had already cooked it long enough so that it would make a ball.

The glass was nearly filled with the concoction and the pan was emptied considerably when finally our patience was at an end and we decided to give up cooking—ball stage or not. Besides the room was beginning to smell suspiciously of something burning.

So the next step was to mix the mess with chopped nuts. We did it in the electric mixer. But when we finally turned the current off, even the bowl of the mixer seemed to have been mixed with the sticky stuff which had by that time turned stone hard. So we scraped with the kitchen knife to save whatever we could.

The resulting sweets finally tasted delicious. But our pleasure was considerably diminished by the amount of dirty dishes and pans which it took us literally hours to scrape clean.

After my days were thus pleasantly spent, the crucial moment came for me with bed time hour (in case there was no parental authority present). I had to make the children go to bed. I needed all my persuasion to move them to quit television. But I have done it.



By Betsy Liles

Pierre's Basement was a fog of smoke. Couples swayed to and fro to the soft music of a juke box in the corner. Draped over the juke box, ripe for adventure, lurked Sally Salem. With a bored air she was chanting a few hundred lines of *Paradise Lost*. Sally was truly a woman of moods, for suddenly something within her caused her eyebrows to lift and wiggle like antennae. Then she noticed him. It was as if Destiny was drawing Sally; she slinked over to him.

"Light?"

Harry Street looked up with a dark deep scowl at Sally Salem, who pursed a cigarette between her lips. Gazing at him through half-closed eyes, Sally leaned over the counter at Pierre's and batted her eyelashes. Zipped into her roommate's red velvet and swathed with a purple veil, she looked half witch—and she knew it.

Harry looked into Sally's exotic eyes, and he was swept up by the waves of her perfume (it had been on sale at the book store and Sally couldn't resist it either). You're . . . very beautiful." Harry choked.

Sally gurgled oh, you really shouldn't say that. Cutting her way through the smoke, she slid into the booth beside Harry. Her eyes slithered over him as he lit her cigarette. He's so cuddlesome, her thoughts raced. His sweet watery eyes, the way he chokes when he smokes, his three day beard and his great big nice fraternity pin.

"I need you," Harry murmured. Sally melted. "I can't pay the check," he added. She managed to smile and slip a nickel under the coffee cup. Then Harry whispered huskily in a soft soprano, "Let's hippity-hop right out of here." And dragged Sally and the purple veil out of Pierre's.

Sally and Harry walked out into the night. There was a magicness in the air. The Mexican band played gently in the background and some sweet buzzards cooed to each other in the trees. They stopped by the lily pond and looked at their images in the water, and then, as the clock began to bong, Harry walked his lady back to her dorm. Swishing her purple veil around her, she signed in with her left hand and caught Harry with her right. "You'll call again, wontcha?" But Harry was the artiste type . . . he only snarled mysteriously and stumbled out the door.

But Sally was undaunted; she knew Harry would call; she ate her meals in the telephone booth so she would be sure to hear the phone. But alas, Harry didn't call. After that, days became nightmares. The little buzzards no longer cooed in the treetops. Sally used to see her cuts hanging out across the street at Pierre's.

Miserably, she wasted down to 155 pounds. She had desperate thoughts of joining the French Foreign Legion and being an ambulance driver. But worst of all, she even had visions of Harry holding hands with a blonde—the kind that calls everybody "dahling." Finally, Sally admitted it to herself—she was snowed!

Then one afternoon, as Sally sat pinching her straw at Pierre's, her hair stood on end. Her blood began to boil and she felt dizzy. Wheeling around, she saw HIM. Haarrrrrr—she screamed.

Harry said not a word, but gathered her up in his arms. "Can you ever forgive me?" he choked. With tears flooding down her cheeks and mussing her purple veil, Sally dutifully nodded. And outside she heard sweet cooing of the buzzards build into a crescent. Then Harry Street shyly took hold of her hand and sweetly snarled at her. You see, Harry was snowed too!