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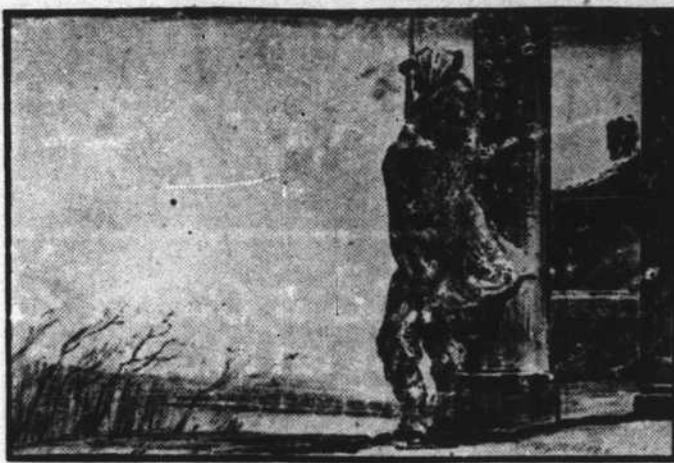
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Mr. Gillmor's widely discussed and
praised editorial in FRIDAY Magazine



Winter Soldiers

As a little boy I lived in Washington. I grew up among the monuments, the statues, and the other mementoes of America's great history, which others come thousands of miles to see. I used to play with my boat in the reflecting pool which casts the images of the Lincoln Memorial and the Washington Monument up from its clear surface.

The Washington Monument was to me just a place to see the city from; to try to find "our" house from its windows was an exciting experience. And the Lincoln Memorial, to me the most beautiful building in all the world, was then of no significance. I was grateful to it only because it had caused "them" to build the long pool in front of it. I didn't know who "they" were, but I did know that I liked to race a sail-boat with the other boys and that "they" permitted the pool to be used for this purpose.

One fall evening I played there longer than I should have. The fall sun sank below the Memorial and the city lights went on before I realized that I would be late in getting home. I think that was the day I discovered who "they" were. As I started for home, I looked toward the

Memorial. Only the indistinct, massive outline of the building remained. Inside it the light had been turned on, and suddenly for the first time I saw that there was a Man there, a great, tired, kindly Man. I remember I stayed there a few minutes, forgetting the consequences of delay.

I knew that this Man was "they." I knew for the first time that "they" were not the pompous little men who strode about Washington in black suits waving their hats to the populace. I knew that you don't get to be one of "them" that way.

That one look at the noble face of Lincoln taught me more than a thousand history books could teach; that those who serve mankind are not the "summer soldier and the sunshine patriot." The Valley Forge soldier, the man or woman who stands it when the cause of true Democracy is unpopular, become the "they" of history. Those who stand against the tide of hysteria and the cry for war today are those who serve their country and their Democracy well. They are the winter soldiers.

Don Gillmor

Don Gillmor

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La Befana, Penitent Old Woman, Brings Christmas Gifts in Italy

Santa Claus doesn't visit children in Italy. It isn't because they are all naughty, but because there is no Santa Claus—in Italy.

No one runs down to a well decorated tree on Christmas morning to look for presents. Brightly colored

when several men dressed like kings stopped in front of her cottage. They asked her where Bethlehem was, but she had never heard of it.

The men told her about a baby which had been born in Bethlehem, and mentioned a star which had been guiding them. The old lady wished she could accompany them when they left her in search of the infant Jesus.

But La Befana stayed home. It was getting too dark out, and besides, the baby could wait until tomorrow. Later that night she noticed the sky quivering with light. The clouds seemed to take the form of angels. All thought of sleep left her. Rising, she carefully wrapped two gifts for the Holy Baby, then ran out into the night in the direction the kings had gone.

Fast as she hurried, she had not reached Bethlehem when the star disappeared and dawn filled the sky. She frantically asked the way to Bethlehem, but no one could tell her.

And so La Befana has constantly traveled since that day, searching for the Christ Child. On the Epiphany, 12 days after Christmas, she goes from house to house, looking into the faces of babies. With each she leaves a gift, hoping that at last she will give her presents to the right child.



La Befana still carries her presents for the Christ Child.

flowers decorate the room instead of Christmas trees, and presents are not exchanged until January 6.

On that night, an old, old lady, La Befana, walks from house to house and leaves a present beside each little child she visits.

Exactly 1,940 years ago, according to the Italian legend, La Befana was very busy sweeping her kitchen

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