

Fine Old Christmas

with Snowy Hair and Ruddy Face



By Marjorie Howe Dixon

Walden had been standing at the window for fully five minutes watching the drops slide down the window pane. Horrid old rain! Why did it have to rain? The snow was so lovely the day before and now it was rapidly turning to slush, under the steady downpour.

"Christmas was over. His heart's desire, a new sled and huckey skates, had been fulfilled. But, shunks, what good were they in the rain! It just spoiled everything. Mother saw, as she always did, just what state he was in. Drops were going to slide down his cheeks instead of the glass in another moment. If something weren't done immediately.

Walden, dear—please come over by the fire! It's been such a lousy week, hasn't it? We aren't going to spoil it with gloom, now are we? You and Lum-dum draw up a little further. I think it will suggest a game to you. You listen hard and see if it doesn't!"

Objected to Baby Name

Lum Dum having arrived at the age of six sometimes objected to her baby name, and insisted on her own, "Ruth Ann" with dignity. This time she didn't care. She had dressed her favorite doll at least fourteen times that morning and undressed her and put her to bed as many times. She felt quite willing that Vivian Rose Violet Lily should sleep awhile in peace, now that other amusement was off.

Mother had read them a bit about Maggie and Tom in "The Mill on the Floss," before. The morning of the snow she had read to them the beginning of the chapter "The Christmas Holidays" because it was just that kind of a day she said. "Fine old Christmas with snowy hair and ruddy face!" She began again and went on:

"Snow lay on the roof and river bank in undulations softer than the limbs of infancy—Old Christmas smiled—for he meant to light up home with new brightness, to deepen all the riches of indoor color and give a keener edge of delight to the warm fragrance of food."

Passes Box of Candy

Walden began to brighten up when Mother read this last part and glanced around at the firelight and the pleasant room as if seeing them for the first time. He went over very quietly, so as not to disturb the reading to get his box of candy and pass it around. The two children nibbled in silence as Mother read on.

It was Ruth Ann who interrupted suddenly. "Mother! We can play we are them—He'll be Tom and I'll be Maggie. And we'll

trim my doll house with holly like it says they did. What does it say—Windows and mantle pieces and picture frames? Tom, you drag out the Doll house. And I'll cut some little holly from some of the Christmas wrappings. And we'll have the dolls be Aunt and Uncle Moss and the seven children. And they can all go to church and everything."

Walden had been studying the next paragraph at his mother's shoulder. "Tom and Maggie must have been in bed when they heard Singing under the windows at midnight, so we'll be the singers and you pick out some more dolls to be Tom and Maggie," she says.

"She's much too big," said Walden, absently, trying to decide which doll would be Tom, and reconcile in his somewhat practical mind the fact that the toy village was much smaller than the dolls' house; and how were the miscellaneous assortment of dolls ever to get in the church which was about two inches high?

Mother had come over to her desk to write thank you letters to her friends and New Year cards to the people she had forgotten to send Christmas cards to. She hesitated to see how this difficulty would be straightened out.

"There's just two lily dolls to choose from, for Tom, and they both are ready," said Walden. "Tom was a big boy." Walden was holding out a fat smiling infant in rompers and a doll made

Young Northcott



Here's a new picture of Gordon Stewart Northcott, charged with murdering several boys on a poultry farm in Riverside county, Cal.

of gum drops and tooth picks.

Poor Gum Drop!

Lum Dum looked over. "You've eaten one arm and one foot off the gum drop boy, so he won't do," she said. "My darling Patrick, Henry—give-me-liberty-or-death will have to be Tom. Come here, Patrick, if you are going to church you must put your hood on. And shame on you for a big boy wearing a hood!" She giggled.

Walden laughed too and Mother returned to her letters peacefully knowing that things were starting well.

She looked up again. "Mother, how did Tom get home from school?" Walden was asking. "I'd like to have him come on my railroad train. Did they have trains those days?"

Mother opened to the previous chapter. "Oh, here it is. The happiness of seeing the bright light in the parter at home, as the air passed noiselessly over the snow covered bridge."

"What is a gik?"

"It's a carriage, dear."

Must Go Around Switch

"Well we'll play it is short for engine. I haven't any bridge, so it will have to go around by the switch."

Mother watched them with interest as the chubby doll, larger than the ear itself, was trundled about the tracks and received with many kisses and much enthusiasm by Ruth Ann, who was Mrs. Tulliver for the time being.

"Oh, think!" said Walden. "Tom was twelve or thirteen years old. Ruth Ann, he'd have been kissed like that!"

"His my darling boy, come home to his dear mother," cooed Ruth Ann who wanted to see that justice was done to a scene, in which she could properly shine.

"I was glad I had remembered that chapter on Christmas in 'The Mill on the Floss,' because it gave them something new to think about. I'll have to write and tell grandmother all about it. I must go and do it right away, too, before I forget that remarkable session. But, if you only could have seen him, looking so solemn and (unobtrusively) glancing at her husband) so exactly like his Dad."

At this point Mother fled and turning at the doorway wrinkled her nose at him. Then she went on upstairs to write Grandmother.

Police spotted a wedding in Chacao when they arrested the best man on his way with a load of beer. They threw cold water on that party.

MOTORS ON CHINA'S RIVERS

TEIENTSIN (AP)—American-made outboard motors are adding a bit of noise to the usually quiet traffic of China's Hai Ho river and other waterways of the north, where sails and cars alone have been used. The shallow streams bar the use of large vessels and the outboard motor boats have become a popular means of travel in

CHINESE WORKING MINES

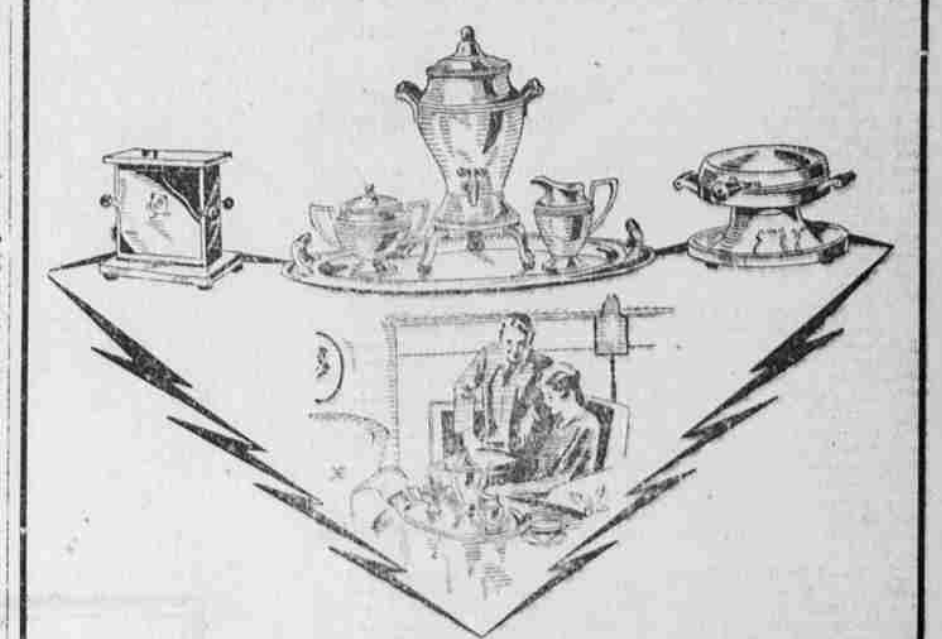
CANTON (AP)—South China's provincial government is promoting exploration work in Kwangtung in the hope of working large deposits of coal, peat, tin, gold, limestone and bismuth. It is expected deposits of lead, granite, marble, tungsten, molybdenum and uranium also will be found. Mining never has reached a paying basis in Kwangtung because of heavy taxation by military leaders.

SENTENCED TO CHURCH

CLANTON, N. C. (AP)—Four young men here were sentenced to attend church services for four consecutive Sundays when found guilty of gambling.

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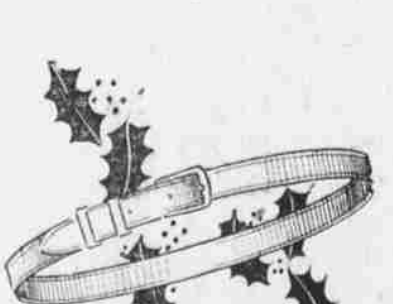
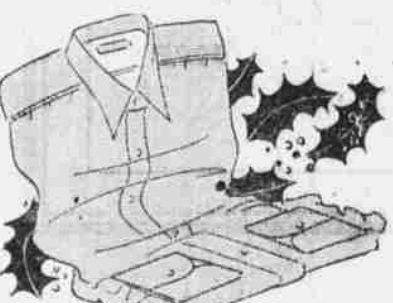
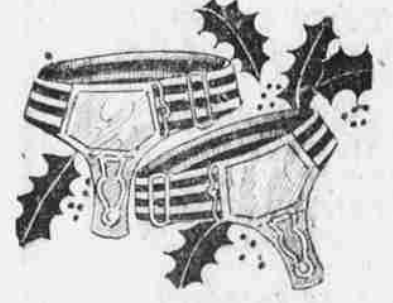
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