

### A Santa Claus For Keeps by Helen Waterman

BABS was such a little girl to be disappointed at Christmas, but there seemed no other way.

Her mother called her to the bedside. "Babs, darling," she began softly, "Christmas will soon be here."

The little girl's eyes shone. "It won't be the same this year, darling. There won't be any presents, or well—anything."

"No Santa Claus?"

"You're going on five, Babs. Try to understand. What we call Santa Claus is really just the love people have for each other at Christmas." Her voice trailed off in a fit of coughing. "That pillow—there—now I can breathe. It isn't I don't love you, darling. I just can't do things this Christmas."

"Why, Mummy, you're crying!"

"No, no I'm not. See? Why don't you run out and play a bit? Get your coat and rubbers."

Babs went out into the snow very thoughtful. A group of children were



He came dressed as she had seen him first, and with a bag of toys.

playing down the block, but she didn't want company. She turned the other way.

Of course there was a Santa Claus. Hadn't he come last year? And all her playmates—he came to see them, too. How could Mummy be so mistaken?

She hadn't intended to come so far. But it was fun walking on the crisp, crunchy snow. And there, ahead, were men stringing lovely colored lights and loops of greenery on lamp posts. They might know whether there was a Santa Claus.

"What's she want, Bill?"

"I can't just get it. Something about Santa Claus."

"Why, sure, kid. Just down the block. He's ringing a little bell."

The men laughed, and Babs laughed, too. Santa Claus! She would find Santa Claus.

Then she saw him, all dressed in red and with a long white beard. He was sitting by a big red box, and every now and then someone would drop money into it. Babs stood for a long while watching, fascinated by the red-clad figure.

At last the Santa Claus noticed her, and for a while he watched her, too, without speaking. It had started snowing again, great soft flakes. Suddenly Babs realized that she was cold, that she didn't dare to talk to Santa Claus, and that she didn't even know her way home. She began to cry.

The tinkling stopped, and the Santa Claus came over. "What's the matter?" he asked gently. She let him lead her back to the big red box. He took her up on his lap, and gave her the little bell to ring. Slowly she told her story. Mummy, who was so sick, had said there wasn't any Santa Claus this year. Babs took care of Mummy. She didn't know how to get home, but it was down that way some place.

"I think I had better see if we can't find your Mummy," Santa Claus declared. "She's probably worried about you."

They found the right neighborhood with no great difficulty. Babs insisted that Santa Claus come in, "to show Mummy there really is a Santa Claus," and he agreed. Then things began happening. There was a doctor, and a nurse, and Babs must be quiet, and mustn't see Mummy—not for days. Through it all Santa Claus kept coming back, only without the beard or red suit.

Until Christmas, that is, and then he came dressed as she had seen him first, even to the little bell, and with a big red box full of toys for her. And as an even grander present, he said that Mummy was well enough to sit up.

He was very tender to Mummy, and carried her gently to the big chair that was ready for her. Babs was sure that Mummy looked prettier than she had ever seen her.

"My," said Babs, "I wish you could stay here forever."

And the Santa Claus man answered very gravely, "Thank you, Babs. There's nothing I should like better."

But he wasn't looking at Babs. It was more as though he were talking to Mummy. Babs didn't think to wonder why.

Anyway, Mummy was smiling, and that made Christmas perfect.

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### Fruits Always Are Hard to Resist

#### Nothing Makes Lovelier Centerpiece Than Grapes

By EDITH M. BARBER

IF YOU are anything like me, you find it hard to resist the purchase of a variety of fruits at this time of year when you go to market. I just must have my fruit bowl filled with blushing green pears, red, yellow and blue plums and golden peaches, with a red apple or two. Then there are red and white grapes for a final garnish. Nothing makes a lovelier centerpiece for the dinner table. At the same time the decorations may furnish the dessert.

The pears, which may be too hard to eat when purchased, can go on ripening in the fruit bowl. Just be sure not to let them overripen. These hard pears are, of course, well adapted for cooking. They may be baked or "poached" in a syrup which may be given color and flavor by means of a dash of grenadine. I also like to cook a few slices of lemons in the syrup, both on account of the flavor which the tartness provides and because of the garnish which they give. You may like to stud the pears with cloves before cooking and to add a piece of stick cinnamon to the syrup.

When pears are low in price, you will begin to think about canning them in syrup and spicing them for use during winter. Occasionally this fruit is used for marmalade, but always in combination with other fruits of more distinctive flavor. The same is true when the sliced or diced fruit is used as a cup for a first course.

On the other hand, plums seem to have been designed especially for marmalade, particularly those which are acid in flavor. They may, of course, be canned and spiced and nothing is better for cobblers. At least that is my opinion. By the way, have you ever used plums to flavor ice cream? Down in Virginia recently I tasted for the first time green gage ice cream, which is a local specialty.

#### Dumplings With Stewed Fruit.

- 1 cup mashed potatoes
  - 1 cup flour
  - ½ teaspoon salt
  - ¼ cup shortening
  - 1 egg
  - Stewed fruit
- Mix mashed potatoes, flour, salt and melted shortening together. Add egg, mix thoroughly. Drop from a teaspoon on top of any stewed fruit mixture when it has partially cooked. Cook uncovered over a low fire about 15 minutes.

#### Medley Conserve.

- 14 yellow peaches, pared
- 8 red plums, pared
- 1 pound white grapes, stemmed
- 1 small can diced pineapple
- 1 large orange
- Sugar
- 2 cups chopped Brazil nuts or almonds

Cut peaches and plums into small pieces, halve grapes, drain juice from canned pineapple and slice orange. Mix the fruit and measure. Allow three-quarters of a cup of sugar to each cup of fruit. Mix sugar and fruit in a large kettle and cook over a low fire, stirring constantly until the sugar is dissolved. Cook 30 to 40 minutes, until syrup is thick. Stir in nuts and boil one minute. Pour into clean, hot jars and seal immediately. Makes 11 to 12 six-ounce glasses.

#### Plum Jam.

- 2½ pounds sour ripe plums
  - 7½ cups sugar
  - ½ bottle fruit pectin
- Pit plums and cut into small pieces. Crush well and add one-fourth cup of water, cover and cook over a low fire five minutes. Stir in sugar and stir until dissolved over a low fire. Bring to a boil over a hot fire and stir constantly while mixture boils one minute. Boil one minute, remove from fire and stir in fruit pectin. Skim and pour quickly into clean, hot glasses and seal with paraffin. Makes 12 to 13 six-ounce glasses.

#### Ginger Pears.

- 4 pounds sliced green pears
  - 2 ounces of green ginger root
  - 2 lemons
  - 3 pounds sugar
- Select hard green pears and slice very thin. Scrape and cut the ginger root in tiny pieces and squeeze a little lemon juice over it. Cover the pears with the sugar and let them stand several hours. Place over a slow fire and let them simmer; add the ginger root and the juice and grated rind of the lemons. When clear and very thick, remove from fire and put in hot clean jars. Seal.

#### Pear Amber.

- 5 firm pears
  - 2 cups sugar
  - 2 cups water
  - 1 stick cinnamon
  - 2 slices lemon
  - Salt
  - 1 tablespoon gelatin
- Pare, halve and core the pears. Make a syrup with the sugar and water. Add the pears, cinnamon, lemon and salt and cook slowly until the pears are tender. Arrange pears in serving dish. To the hot syrup add the gelatin, which has been soaking in a little cold water five minutes. Stir until dissolved and strain the mixture over the pears. Cool and then chill in refrigerator until firm. Serve with boiled custard.

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### How the Throne Descends When a Sovereign Passes

Within the reigning English family the throne descends according to the same principle of primogeniture that formerly governed in the inheritance of land. When a sovereign dies, the eldest son—who is by birth duke of Cornwall and is created prince of Wales and earl of Chester—inherits; if he is not living, his eldest surviving son succeeds, or in lieu of a son, the eldest surviving daughter. If no heir is available in this branch of the family, the deceased sovereign's second son (or a son or daughter thereof) inherits, and so on, elder sons being always preferred to younger, and male heirs to female, notes a writer in the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

As Queen Victoria was an only child, the daughter of Edward, duke of Kent, the fourth son of George III, the throne would have descended to Ernest, duke of Cumberland and earl of Armagh, the eighth child and fifth son of George III, in the event of Victoria's death before she became queen.

Victoria ascended the throne upon the death of William IV, the third son of George III. William had three daughters who predeceased him.

### The Magnetic Poles

The action of the compass needle is accounted for by considering the earth as a huge magnet, with one of its poles, the North magnetic pole, not very far from the North pole and the other, the South magnetic pole, not far from the South pole. The North magnetic pole attracts the north-seeking pole of the compass, which is magnetized. One explanation given for the earth's magnetism is that this is due to electrical currents caused by daily heating of the earth's surface.

### High Class

"Boy, have we got a ritzy secretary at our office!" writes Hector. "When she wants to find out who's calling on the phone, she asks very loftily: 'This is Mister Whom?'"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

### Splendid

Father—And what are your prospects?

Suitor—Splendid, sir, unless your daughter has been misleading me. —Philadelphia Bulletin.

### On Her Best Behavior

Mother—And who is the best behaved in your class?  
Sonny—Teacher.

### No Records of Birth or Death of Hermit Bochica

A little-known legend dating from the era before the Spanish conquistadors vanquished the peoples of eastern and southern South America, implicates Bochica, who, according to tradition handed down by the Chibcha Indians of Colombia, stemmed a deluge which had descended for many weeks and was threatening to extinguish a race numbering between twenty and forty thousand persons who inhabited the Andean plateau on which Bogotá, the republic's capital, founded four centuries ago by Gonzalo Jimenez de Quesada, stands. No portrait of Bochica survives, writes Kent B. Stiles in the New York Times. Only a symbolic figure of this god is worshiped by the remnants of the Chibcha tribes.

Bochica, who "came from nowhere," lived as a hermit in a cave and abruptly disappeared, according to Chibcha superstition as related by an official of the chamber of commerce in New York. There are no records of the god's birth and death, nor was his nationality known by the Chibchas. A bearded stranger who knew the Chibcha language although he was not an Indian, was intelligent and educated. He taught the Chibchas how to weave and make pottery, how to pave highways and till farms productively, and he devised weights and measures and contrived currency of gold disks. When continuous rains from the skies jeopardized the lives of the natives, Bochica, with a stroke of his golden scepter, cleft a mountain so that the waters escaped, and in performing this wonder he created Tequendama falls, one of South America's scenic beauty spots.

### Inventors of Photography

There have been numerous inventors of photographic processes. J. H. Schultz, in 1727, made the first photographic copy of writing. In 1802, Thomas Wedgwood copied pictures by the action of light. Joseph N. Niepce produced the first permanent pictures, in 1814. Louis J. M. Niepce, in 1827, made public the details of his daguerreotype process of sensitizing a silver plate with iodine and developing with vapors of mercury the image produced on exposure. Niepce's photographs were made on tin, coated with bitumen of Judea; this bitumen, which is soluble in essence of lavender, becomes insoluble when exposed to light. After 14 years of experimenting he was able to fix permanently the image of the camera on tin. For some years before his death Niepce was in partnership with Daguerre, and later his son Isadore joined Daguerre in his work.

### Acquaintances

An enthusiastic golfer came home to dinner. During the meal his wife said: "Willie tells me he caddied for you this afternoon."  
"Well, do you know," said Willie's father, "I thought I'd seen that boy before."—El Paso Times.

### 'Buncombe' Was Original Form of Word 'Bunk'

The original form of the word "bunk" was "Buncombe," which has been corrupted into "bunkum" and "bunk." It originated in the United States house of representatives in 1820, during the close of the debate on the Missouri compromise. Felix Walker, a mountaineer, represented the North Carolina district, which included Buncombe county. When the house was otherwise unanimous in demanding a vote on the question, relates a writer in the Indianapolis News, Walker insisted on making a speech. Several members gathered around him and begged him to desist. He continued, however, declaring that his constituents expected him to say something on the subject and that he was bound to "make a speech for Buncombe." Thus the word came to mean any humbug or claptrap, especially insincere political talk intended for the galleries.

Buncombe county was created in 1791, and was named for Edward Buncombe, a colonel in the Revolution, who was wounded at the battle of Germantown in 1777, and who died a prisoner of war in Philadelphia the following year.

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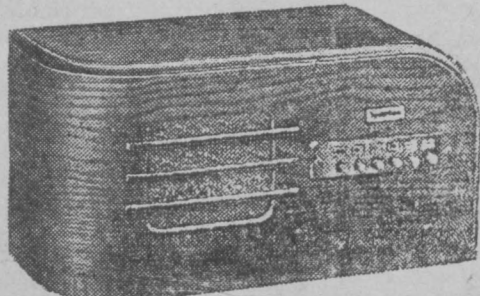






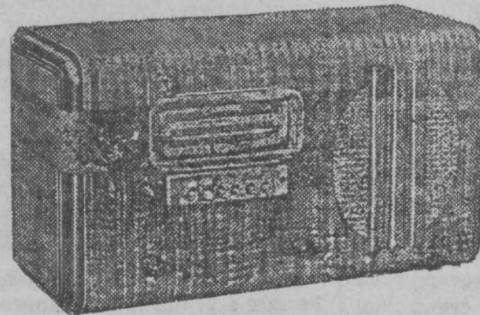
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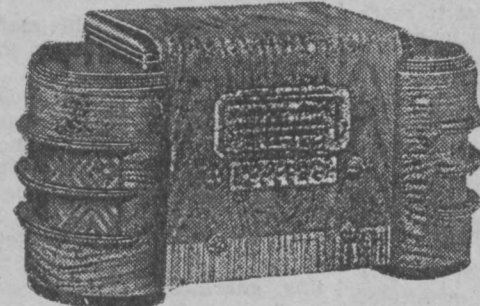
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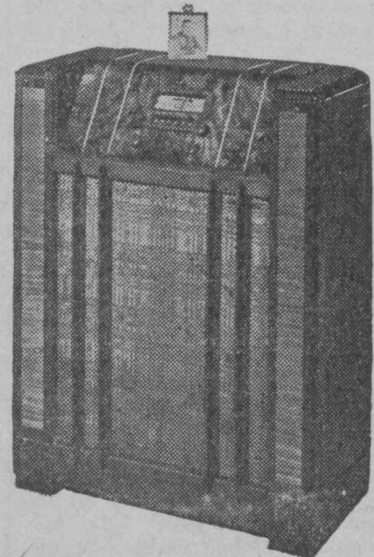
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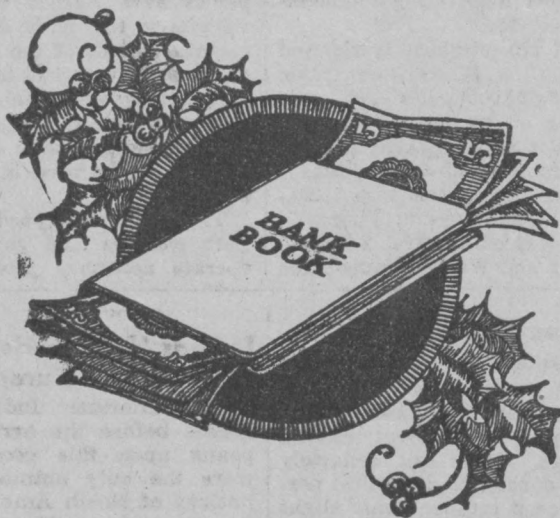
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