

Quiet Christmas

Kate Yarrow had so often heard her father remark that she would be an old woman before her time, that she had begun to think of herself as quite middle-aged. Actually she was not quite 30, nor had her full days as mistress of the Yarrow household turned her hair gray or her cheeks wan. Sometimes, since she had taken her mother's place, Kate did think she was imposed upon. But she had no one. Her father was generous enough with the money, and she had Marie in the kitchen and old Sam for outside work. But the inconsiderate younger brother and sister, a preoccupied father and a grumbling grandfather made a household that required attention.

For the past two years, Kate thought there had really been no Christmas. But this year would be different. The brothers, all in various schools or colleges, had accepted invitations to spend the holidays with room-mates. One brother was visiting an aunt, and the other had gone south with her parents to his young grandfather. Kate's father was spending the season with a thoroughly capable widow who, it had been whispered, he was considering as a possible second wife.



Bill did not neglect his privilege.

So soon as the last member of the brood had faded down the driveway, Kate told Marie and Sam to take a two-day vacation—and then settled back to spend Christmas by herself. She ran into the capacious living room and with a completely undignified leap planted herself sprawling upon the divan. Everyone but Kate gawped on that divan. Kate never down to the kitchen to make her Christmas holidays by staying there for hours.

Before dinner-time she donned her best evening frock and over the door she hung a basket for you to take along. Then she went down to the kitchen to make her meal, admitting for the first time that it was rather lonesome in the old house. She heard loud rappings on the old brass knocker

HOLIDAY at HOME

Christmas and Margaret were packing to go home. Contrary to traditional sentiment, she was not happy about it, for she had planned to stay in New York with Ralph. With considerable forethought she had even planned the day; church in the morning, Christmas dinner with Army and Bill, a walk down Fifth Avenue at twilight, a snack of supper, and the theater.

But Ralph had been invited to a "swell house party in Philadelphia." Margaret slammed down the top of her suitcase. She could have borne up under a Christmas with a lovely mother, or a widowed sister.

"What about me?" she had asked and went to open the door rather timidly.

But her timidity gave way to annoyance. There was her older brother, Tom, who had started that morning ostensibly to pass the holidays with a group of bachelor friends. And here he was, back with five young men in tow! They were heavily laden, turkey feet protruding from one of the bundles.

"We, we began talking it over," Tom said, "and decided Christmas at the club would be a treat. So I asked the fellows to come home with me. I was afraid you wouldn't have things for the feast, so we stopped and got what we thought you'd want. Bill, here, even got a mistletoe, though I told him there'd be no pretty girls."

Then, turning to one of the young men whom Kate had never met, the tactless brother went on: "Bill, this is my sister. Now I'll run along and get the car in the garage. And, sis, you might take the fellows up and show 'em where you want 'em to sleep!"

Bill alone of the young bachelors noted the note of disappointment on Kate's face. Later, after she had prepared an impromptu Christmas Eve supper and laid aside her smock, she heard Bill say from the other end of the table: "I thought Tom said there would be no pretty girls here. Boys, let's drink a toast to Sister Kate!"

It was past midnight that night when Kate left the kitchen. The boys had helped with the dishes and the puddings to make for the next day and Kate knew she would have her hands full. She was up early to prepare the festive breakfast, and all day she worked in the kitchen.

It was late Christmas night when she had finished the last work in the kitchen. As she passed through to hall, Bill stood waiting for her. There, above them, hung the mistletoe—and Bill did not neglect his privilege.

"It isn't just because of the mistletoe," he told Kate, holding her still close to him. "I loved you when I first saw you. It has been outrageous for us to impose on you this way."

"It's all been worthwhile, Bill," Kate replied, "because I've made myself believe that I was doing it all for you—alone!"

longed to cry out, but she had, instead, smiled and said that it was just too marvelous, wondering meanwhile if Mr. Johnson would let her have an extra day off. Ralph had only to go to Philadelphia, two hours away, while she had no one within 500 miles!

Now she was ready, bag in hand, for the midnight train. As she waited for the taxicab, she smoothed her black tailored woolen frock over her slim hips. If New York hadn't been particularly kind to her, it had at least taught her how to dress!

She couldn't sleep on the train. Closing her eyes, she saw the cluttered desk which she had left at Roswell's advertising agency, and Mr. Johnston's kindly face when he had told her to go home for Christmas. She saw Ralph's desk in the manager's office, Ralph dancing in Philadelphia, Ralph opening Christmas gifts—and just Ralph with whom she would never again share good times.

There was a three-hour wait for the local train at Pittsburgh, but Margaret was too tired and depressed to leave the station. After buying a magazine featuring an article on men, and an astrological delineation of her birth-sign, she settled herself into the practical task of trying to determine her future in this most unpredictable world. Several hours later, not much wiser but much more weary, she stood on the porch of a white frame house.

The door opened and Margaret blinked.

"I win!" shouted Ralph triumphantly. "She came on the midnight train!"

Mrs. Brown rushed out to the hallway and enfolded her daughter in an ample, motherly embrace. "Margaret! Why, you're a sight! Your face is as black as coal!"

Margaret withdrew herself from her mother's arms and looked at the two of them coolly. "Well, if it isn't asking too much, just what is this? Not a weekend in Philadelphia, I believe!"

Ralph took her bag and magazine and helped her out of her coat. "Don't be like that, Margaret! I bet your mother a box of candy against a glance pie that you'd come down on the midnight train."

"And what, exactly, are you doing here?" chided her mother. "I invited myself. A surprise for you, and then I wanted to talk to your Dad about something..."

Ralph was awkwardly turning the magazine in his hands. "Jumping fishes!" he exclaimed. "Look at the little red book!" He opened it to a center page, and read: "The natives of this sign are more than likely to have short tempers."

"Give it to me!"

Ralph held it tantalizingly out of reach and Margaret stamped her foot. "Ralph Wells," she said, "I come home for a rest and the first thing you do is make fun of me. If I have a complete breakdown it's your fault. Give me that book!"

"There, there," comforted her mother. "You go upstairs and get washed. You'll feel better."

Margaret started up the stairs, then turned in sudden remembrance. "Are you staying over Christmas?" she asked Ralph.

Day Days

Mary Crane emptied the last tub and stood it against the shed to drain, sighing her thanks that if she must wash clothes on Christmas Day the job was at least over and done with by noon. She had just returned to the kitchen when a knock came at the door. It was her neighbor, Hattie Jensen, decked out in her finest.

"Aren't you the one," Hattie exclaimed, "washing clothes on Christmas Day?"

Mary conceded it wasn't the best way to pass the day, but added that it must be done.

"I wonder if you'd do me a favour?" Hattie asked. "John and Fanny have asked us to come to town for Christmas dinner and the tree tonight. You know, times were a little tough for Henry and me this year, so I took those two little State orphans to board. Now, I don't want to leave them at home alone, and Fanny wouldn't want them to come mingle with her youngsters. She sighed faintly. "Would you let them come stay with you for the evening?"

"Why, of course," Mary replied, smiling. "It will make Christmas for me, who was spending it alone."

"I will," Hattie said, "for us about five o'clock, and we'll drop them off her on the way."

After Hattie had left, Mary mused that she didn't suppose the Lord thought Fanny's children too good to mingle with these two orphans, but after a moment she realized there was much to be done. By five o'clock she had walked to the store and spent her few pennies on two tiny pairs of red mittens, which were now hanging on the little spruce tree Mary had cut in the back yard. And in the kitchen a hot, hearty supper was waiting.

Mary sat in the living room, waiting today, so I feel justified in wishing, "Lucky I did that extra

spending those pennies on the youngsters. Those children must have a Christmas, and maybe—" she sighed—"I shan't have a home another year!"

Nothing there in the old rocker, her head dropped slowly, and Mary Crane fell asleep...

"One thing I'd like to do before dinner," rich old Andrew Craig said to his wife. "Bosse there's time! You remember Mary Crane had some tough luck a few years back. She borrowed money from the bank on her house and couldn't keep up the payments. Well, the directors decided not to give her any more time."

"I couldn't help remembering our lean years, Sue, when Mary was our neighbor and worked day and night to pull you through pneumonia. So I just gathered in that debt—it was only a few hundred—and let some papers made out to Mary. I'd kind of like to take them out to her on Christmas night."

Sue pulled her head down and kissed him. "It will take just 10 minutes to ask a basket for you to take along," she reckoned swiftly. "If you drive there and back in half an hour, you can do it. Remember, we have guests coming!"

It was snowing when Andrew alighted from the car. A lamp showed him Mary's kitchen through the window, the cheery tree, and the sleeping old lady. He tip-toed in and placed his basket jangling of the door aroused Mary, on the table, papers on top. The Her small guests rushed in a few minutes later to find Mary holding the papers to her heart, her face alight with joy.

"Merry Christmas, Mary," cried the little girl. "There was a man on your steps when we came down the lane. We saw him plain as could be!"

"You're right," said Mary. "An drew Craig is a man if ever there was one."

"Not the man in the fur coat," insisted the child. "It was another just behind him. All tall and bright and—beautiful."

"Well," said Mary. "I'm not surprised. Some folks might say it was shadowy and lamplight and snowflakes, but—tapping the papers—"wherever there's things like this goin' on Christmas night, I'm persuaded He's there!"

EXPENSIVE CHEQUE

KELOWNA, B. C. — (CP) — It cost 12 cents to handle a five-cent cheque sent by Kelowna city to Mrs. Dorothy Christie of Montreal to cover a tax refund. Revenue stamp was three cents, mailing to Montreal, four cents, and Mrs. Christie returned it, using a three-cent stamp, so the city had to pay another two cents postage due.

(Continued on page 7)

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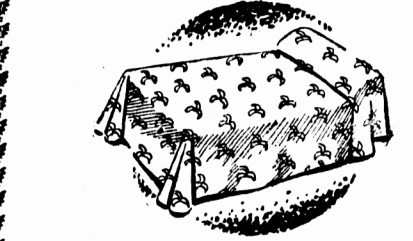
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Home Christmas Gifts

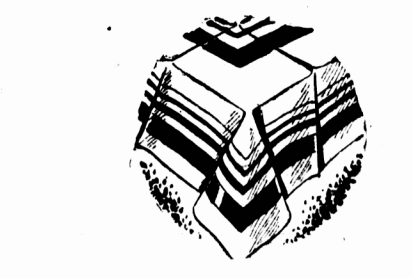
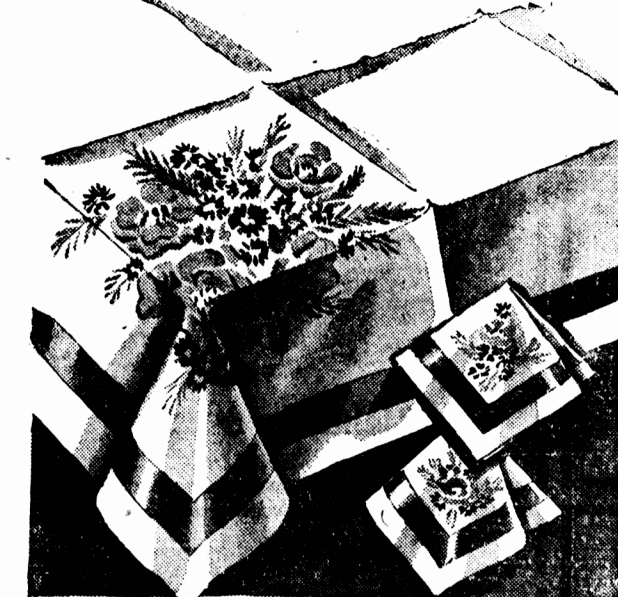


- Lace Runners
- Madeira Bridge Cloths
- Organdie Runners
- Chair Back Sets
- Satin Cushions
- Blankets
- Couch Covers
- Towels
- Towel Sets
- Pillow Slips
- Lace Tablecloths



- BATES BEDSPREADS
- SATIN BEDSPREADS
- BROCADE BEDSPREADS

For a charming bedroom choose one of these colorful Bedspreads and Draperies. Pretty as they are practical. Washable and long wearing!



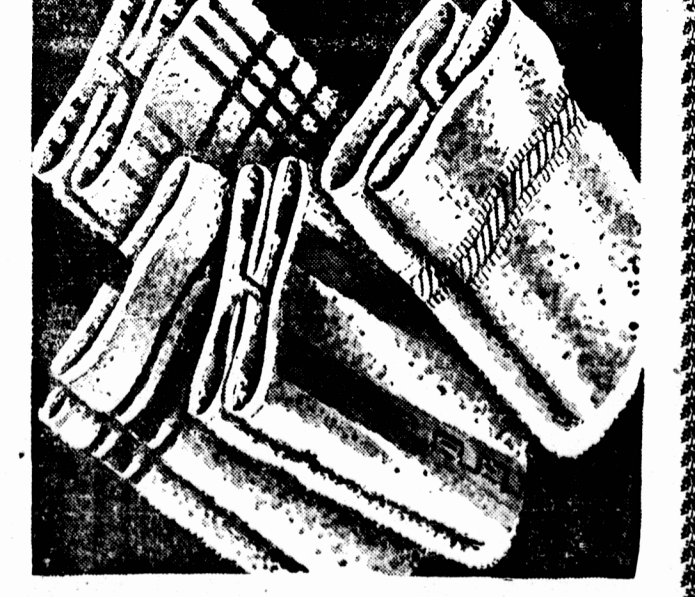
Bright Lunch Cloths

Pretty for every day—and "company." Cotton lunch cloths—large size. Florals, stripes, tablecloths that help make such an attractive table! They're made of sturdy, colorfast cottons that wash beautifully... are priced budget low.



Thirsty Bath Towels

Wonderful value! Big, handsome absorbent towels—just the thing for a tingling rub-down! Closely woven for longer wear, quicker drying.



There's a CHRISTMAS TREE FOR HOSPITALIZED WAR VETERANS

They Gave, Will You?

The City Branch of the Canadian Legion, assisted by the Contact Club and Overseas Nursing Sisters Association, is sponsoring an appeal to provide CHRISTMAS GIFTS for all War Veteran Hospitalized Patients from P. E. I. All you need to do is PURCHASE OR MAKE the article. Purchases may be made in ANY STORE ANYWHERE, but MUST BE PLACED UNDER THE CANADIAN LEGION CHRISTMAS TREE located at MOORE & McLEOD LTD.

200 Gifts Are Needed

HERE ARE SOME SUGGESTIONS

These Are Articles Suitable For and Desired by These Hospitalized Veterans

| | |
|------------------|------------------------|
| CIGARETTES | HANDKERCHIEFS |
| TOILET ARTICLES | PLAYING CARDS |
| SOCKS | CANDY AND FRUIT |
| SWEATERS | PHOTO FRAMES |
| PENS | SLIPPERS |
| PENCILS | MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS |
| SHAVING KITS | WRITING PAPER |
| RAZOR BLADES | ADULT GAMES |
| ZIPPER BILLFOLDS | PIPES AND TOBACCO |
| CRIBBAGE BOARDS | POCKET NOVELS. |

PLEASE REMEMBER!

MAKE IT YOURSELF! BUY IT ANYWHERE!

But, Place It Under Christmas Tree at Moore & McLeod's

NOTE:—Please do not put more than ONE Gift in each parcel. You will be provided with a Card at Moore & McLeod's which you should fill in the contents of parcel, size if any, and your name and address.

MOORE & McLEOD LTD.

CHARLOTTETOWN, P. E. I.

S. A. McDONALD