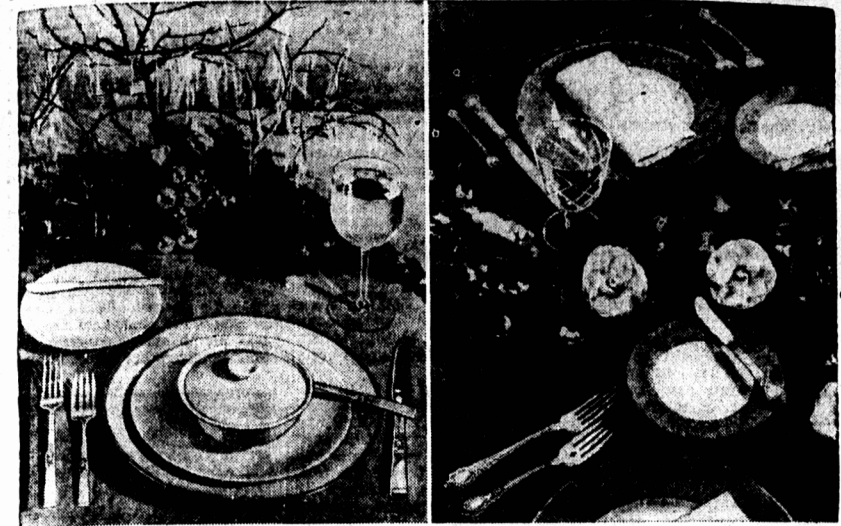


# Imagination Makes a Banquet Board



A contrast in region as well as in mood is offered by these two table settings. The warm Christmas of the South are suggested by quietly-elegant arrangement of camellias and holly which repeat the green-and-white color scheme set by two-tone china, monogrammed napkins and net-over-felt table covering. The stark beauty of glittering icicles on bare black limbs, complemented by clean-lined modern china, silver and glassware (left) is suitable for Yule season in the snowy North.

By Anne Larsen

Christmas dinners in many homes this year will no doubt feel the sharp edge of the high cost of living, with lavish touches of yesterday lopped off the traditional menu as unnecessary trifles.

There's no need, however, for the air of festivity to be lacking from your table simply because stuffed pork chops must be substituted for your usual suckling pig. Imaginative table decorations can make of any meal a feast.

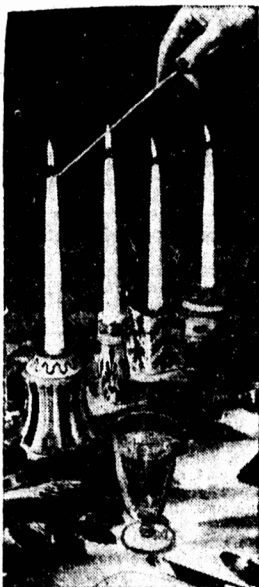
Converting your dinner table into a banquet board need not strain your already overstretched budget. Highly effective arrangements can be concocted from what you find discarded in the attic or the garage, tucked away in your Christmas decoration box, or growing in your own back yard.

If you've an old table in decrepit condition, you can salvage enough raw material to create one of the most ingenious arrangements ever praised by family or friends. Simply saw the legs into appropriate lengths, and convert them into candle holders.

To make these wooden candlesticks, drill a hole in one end to fit the candle and square off the other end so that it will stand firm and level.

The next step, according to Peter Hunt, Provincetown artist who originated this idea, is to sit down with a paint brush and several cans of paint, and simply let your artistic instincts lead you: in whatever direction they will.

The brighter the colors you choose, the gayer your candlesticks will look; the more lavish your designs, the more fitting to



Bright peasant art adds a touch of holiday gaiety to these candle-holders, which were fashioned from sections of old, discarded table legs.

the general abandonment of the season.

A table setting traditionally Southern in feeling may be created by a festive-minded hostess at very little cost. The tablecloth, used in the elegantly-simple arrangement is of dark green felt, which is covered with an over-

layer of white net to set the color scheme.

The felt is allowed to hang to the floor, giving the table an air of Victorian opulence that harmonizes well with the rich design of the sterling flatware. The net, which overhangs the table edge by about ten inches, is scalloped around its border. A small plate is an excellent aid in creating this scalloped design.

The striking green and white are repeated in a garland of holly and white camellias which is twined the length of the table. Artificial snow, sprinkled upon the green, adds a touch of restrained glitter. Christmas roses, or any white December flower, may be substituted for the camellias.

The same feeling of tasteful richness is carried out in the china, which is bordered with a jade-colored band, in the handsome water goblets, and in the monogrammed napkins of linen damask.

The icy breath of the North wind is suggested in a table setting appropriate for a hearty Yankee dinner. The bare branch of a tree, treated with molten plastic to simulate, very realistically, icicles is thrust upright in a bank of living ivy which has been touched here and there with silver paint. A cluster of silver Christmas balls further highlights this simple center piece.

Plain white china, including a service plate banded in platinum, harmonizes well with the mood of icy brilliance set by the table decoration. With this simple modern china is used clean-lined but handsome flatware in a morning star pattern and water goblets of stark, uncluttered beauty.

# Danger Of Fire Is Greatly Enhanced By Christmas Tree

The average Christmas tree can go up in smoke in only two minutes. That doesn't leave much time for the fire department to get there.

A live tree with roots packed in a bucket of earth is the safest. Be sure and keep the dirt moistened. A small tree is safer than a large one and festive trimmings can make up what it lacks in size.

Keep the tree outdoors until you are ready to set it up inside. When you bring it in, keep it in the coolest part of the house with the radiator nearest it turned off.

Use nonflammable aluminum foil—not cotton or paper—to conceal container in which tree is "planted". Use nonflammable trimmings on the tree.

Don't use lighted candles. (This may seem an unnecessary precaution in this day of electric lights, but lighted candles contribute to tragic fires every year.)

Check the wiring for the tree to see that it's not frayed and is in perfect condition. The switch for turning off and on electric lights should be at some distance from the tree. Don't plug or unplug lights beneath the tree.

Don't leave tree lights on when it isn't necessary and especially when the family is away from home. From time to time, check over the tree and see if needles near the lights are turning brown. If they have, move the lights.

Watch the calendar. New Year's is the day for the tree to go down. If you should extend the time, don't leave the lights on the tree for more than a half hour at a time.



In 1937, a Waukegan, Ill., minister and the residents of one city block decided to do something about the disposal of the family Christmas tree. Nothing is more forlorn than worn out Christmas trees. They deserve better fates than being dumped in alleys and vacant lots; and they constitute fire hazards on back porches and in basement airways.

So, Waukegan held its first annual Twelfth Night observances



committing the trees to a community bonfire amid the churning of carols.

And the custom has waxed. Residents of several communities, choruses, soloists, etc., participating as the spirits of the Christmas trees are dispatched to some fit Valhalla to return to bless a future Yuletide.

# Nativity Theme Dominates Cards

Modern Christmas cards feature literally hundreds of interpretations of the popular Nativity theme. Many of these are reproductions from the old masters while many others have been created especially for the Christmas card industry.

The Nativity theme, which naturally lends itself to an almost endless variety of interpretations and a wealth of detail, long has been a favorite subject of Christian artists. Many of the details, based upon certain Bible texts, have fostered various legends—such as those concerning the Magi—which grew until the Wise Men were identified and given kingdoms.

The Annunciation is among the earliest subjects represented in Christian art, antedating the Madonna and Child theme by several centuries, and it is interesting to note that the fathers of the Church determined how the Madonna should be portrayed; her dress and mantle are usually blue and red.

# England's Puritans Banned Christmas As Frivolous Time

Christmas was outlawed in England by the Puritan Government of England in 1643 and, although the restoration of the Stuarts brought a revival of Christmas customs and traditions, Christmas never regained its former prestige in England.

It is observed religiously in the churches and as a day for family reunions and social gatherings, in contrast to the lavish feasting and boisterous merry-making of olden times.

Merry-making and gift-giving come in for their share, however, on December 26 which is Boxing Day. The origin of Boxing Day antedates Christmas and can be traced to the custom of gift-giving during the Roman festival of Saturnalia.

In Christian liturgy December 26 is observed as the feast of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr, and during the centuries when journeymen and apprentices were in the habit of levying upon their masters' customers, "Christmas Boxes" were collected on St. Stephen's day.

Thus, the children receive their



presents, in boxes, as do old servants, the postman, and everyone else. And reminiscent of the Roman Saturnalia, householders dance with the servants and, toward evening, there is revelling in the streets as groups of merry-makers gather on street corners or ride about London-town dancing on the "flats" of trucks.

# Soap Flake Snow

Trimming the Christmas tree with fluffy snow is easy if you use soap flakes. It won't melt either. Here's how it's done: Use three or four cups of soap flakes to one cup of warm water. Beat with electric beater or hand beater until smooth and fluffy. Then spread immediately over branches of tree, scattering it on with hands. For sparkle, spread on some artificial glistening snow.



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Left: Nightgown of nylon and lace with fitted bodice. Comes in white, pink, blue and yellow. 8.95 to 10.95

Tailored Slip, touched with lace. 2.98 - 9.95

Right: Beautifully tailored robe, flannel, plain colors and plaids. 12.95 to 22.95

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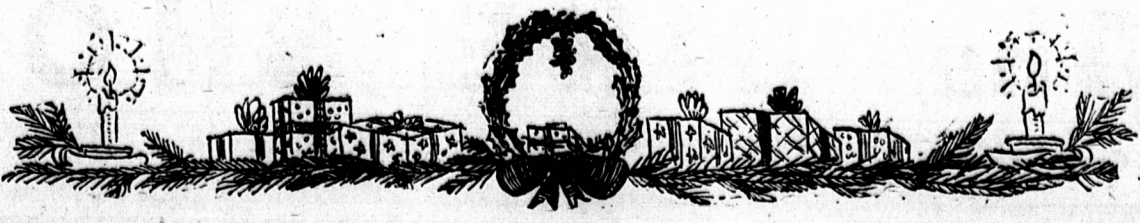
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