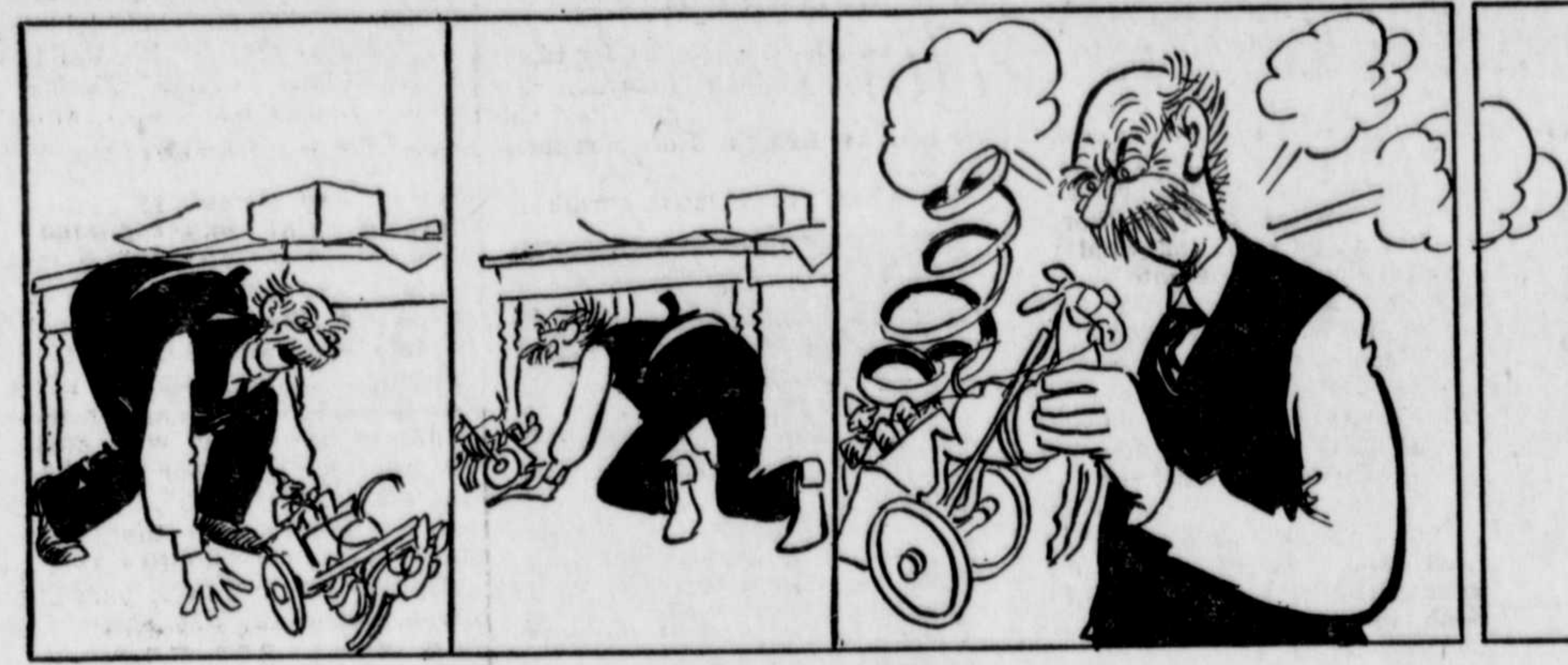
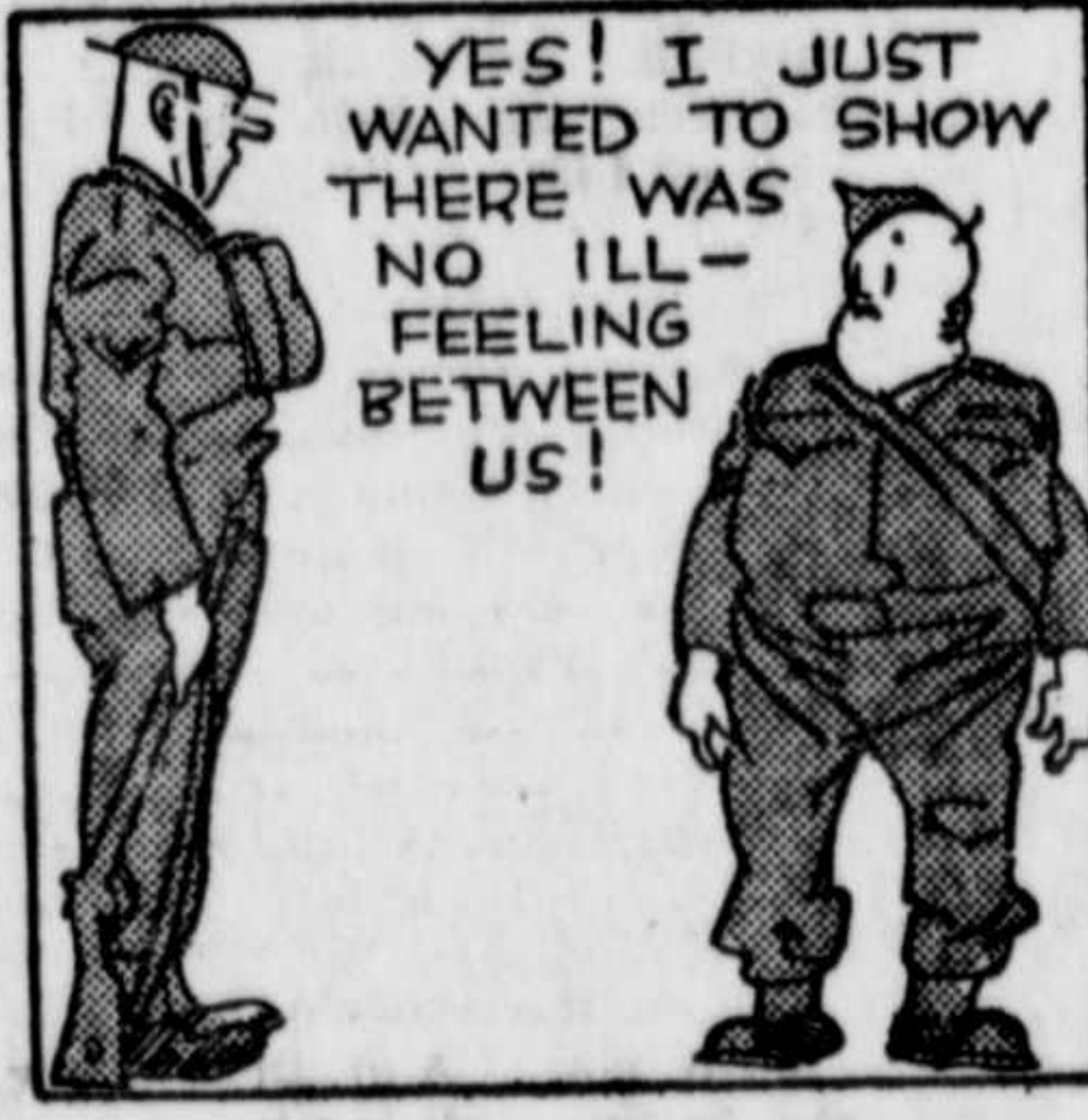
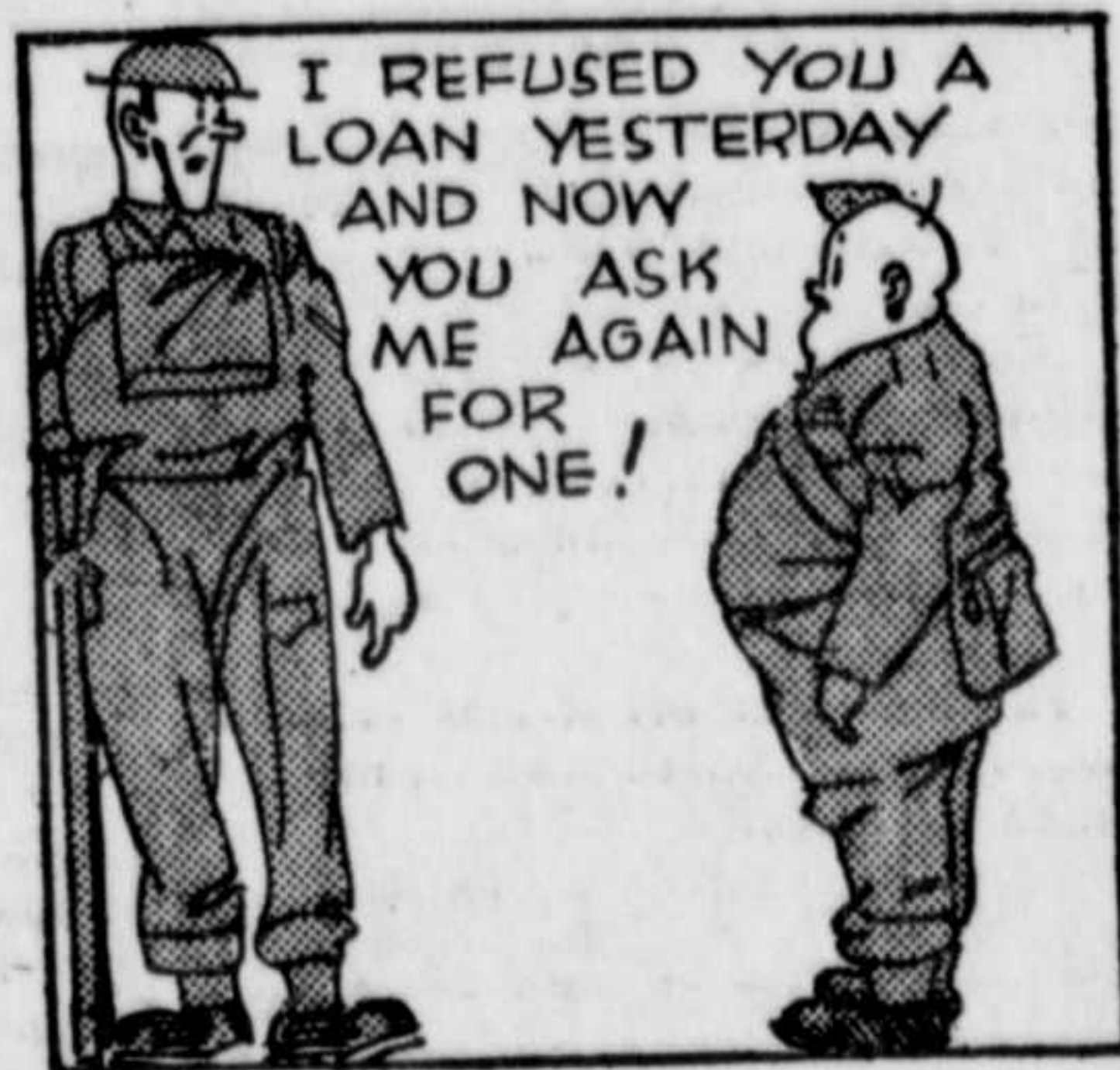


OUR COMIC SECTION



**P
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By
J. Millar Watt
WNU



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By
C. M. Payne
WNU



No Spinach?
An enthusiastic gardener was proud of his crop of monster red currants. Several of his friends, after admiring the fruit, advised him to send an exhibit to the local horticultural show. He took their advice.
On judging being completed and the awards announced, the entrant was disappointed to learn that his currants had won only third prize. He discovered afterward that a mistake had been made. They had been placed in the tomato class.



"Tom makes very sure of himself before he does any boasting."
"A safe blower, eh?"

A CHRISTMAS EVE STORY

by Elizabeth Alden
(McClure Syndicate—WNU Service.)

DAVIE stood at the camp window and looked out over the great frozen lake. "Do you think he'll come right across the ice?"
"He?" Mother answered from the kitchen. "Oh, Santa Claus? Why, perhaps, darling. But not this morning, funny boy; not before evening."
Such unquestioning five-year-old faith, and she must watch its betrayal. Because there weren't going to be any presents. There wasn't any money.
Suddenly Davie screamed with excitement and his mother went running to look out too.
"Why, it's a deer, Davie."
"Reindeer," said Davie, without any question at all.
"One of Santa's, you think? Maybe the sleigh tipped over and all the presents spilled! Isn't that too bad?"
They watched the graceful creature until it disappeared into the woods on the other side. Then mother returned to her baking and Davie followed.
"It's a shame for it to happen just the day before Christmas when there won't be time to make any more. How disappointed all the children in the world will be! But you



Two small blobs appeared far out against the snow.
won't mind so much, will you, Davie darling, because you'll know what happened. Just think, you saw the deer! And wasn't he beautiful?"
"Yes," Davie drew a long sigh of rapturous memory. He fell silent, then: "May I go out and play?"
The eleven o'clock sun was warm and she bundled him out.
Suddenly it was one o'clock and time for lunch. And she had heard no sound from Davie for an hour!
No answer when she called from the door. Davie wasn't in the yard. Of course he had gone to find the sleigh, the tipped-over sleigh and the presents. How could she have failed to consider the way a child's mind would work?
She dared not leave the baby, who had a slight cold, nor start out with her on a search which might last for hours. Nothing to do, then, but wait for Jock to come in midafternoon.
It was three o'clock before a small blob appeared far out against the snow. Two small blobs, in fact. She waited, sobbing with relief.
"I didn't find Santa Claus' sleigh, Mama," he explained as soon as he could speak for her kisses, "but I found his house. She lives there—and that was one of his reindeer. The tracks went right into the yard. Santa Claus was gone. There was just a man asleep in the kitchen. I think he's one of the toy-makers."
"No, that was Ned," said Goldilocks.
"What's your name, dear?"
"Phyllie."
As the afternoon wore on something familiar about the contour of the little face kept tickling her memory until realization struck.
Golden curls and a blue zipper suit! Phyllie! Ned—Ned Cozetti! Of course. This was the Bentley child. Phyllis Bentley, kidnaped Thanksgiving day and given up for dead! Jock, bending to unlace his snowshoes, was met by a whirlwind bundled to its ears in shawls and surrounded by three miniature whirlwinds similarly wrapped.
"Crank up the car right away. We've got to get into town before the telegraph office closes. Do you know who this child is?" The whirlwind gave a bounce and grasped his arm. "Phyllis Bentley, that's all. And her mother thinks she's dead and this is Christmas eve. Oh, hurry! Davie was gone three hours today and I know just how she must feel. And if we get hauled up for driving without a license, there'll be ten thousand dollars to pay the fine!"

St. Nicholas Loved For Piety, Grace

The name of Santa Claus is merely slurring the Dutch San Nicholas, which is, of course, Saint Nicholas. American children are probably the only ones who say it exactly that way.
Nicholas was an actual person. He was Bishop of Myra, in Lycia, Asia Minor, in the first part of the Fourth century, A. D. He was also the youngest bishop in the history of the church.
From the day of his birth Nicholas revealed his piety and grace. He refused on fast days to take the natural nourishment of a child.
But Nicholas was not a barefoot recluse vowed to poverty. His father was a wealthy merchant, and his riches enabled him to be a dispenser of the good things in life.
The feast of Saint Nicholas was originally celebrated on December 6. Later when church people in the late Middle Ages tried to suppress the festivities which grew up around the Boy Saint's day, his festival came to be associated with Christmas day.
Christmas Celebrated in 98
Tradition says that Christmas was first celebrated in A. D. 98. It was ordered to be held as a solemn feast by Pope Telesphorus in A. D. 137. There is no record of any commemoration during the life of Christ.
About A. D. 340, St. Cyril made careful investigation as to the actual date of Christ's birth and reported December 25 as the most nearly correct date. Pope Julius accepted this and established the festival at Rome on this date, which was accepted by every nation in Christendom.

Toys for Little Tots Can Be 'Noise-Makers'

Children from one to four years of age like noise-makers. For them we might suggest a set of a half a dozen baking powder tins, each with something in it to make a noise, as buttons, nails, paper clips, pebbles or screws. Since some of the contents might be easily swallowed, the tops should be firmly cemented on before the tins are given two or three coats of enamel paint, each can a different bright color.

Santa's Troubles



Our mechanized age certainly puts Santa at a disadvantage, because his reindeer never had troubles like this. Several inches of snow prove too much for his modern carriage, so Santa Claus has to wield a snow shovel in front of a New York store to free it. (Editor's note: Wonder what he does at the North pole where the snow is really deep.)

Christmas Marked In Early Colonies By Jollity, Feasting

Early American colonies along the Atlantic seaboard could have been located on different continents, so far as their Christmas celebrations were concerned.
Many of the customs of England were followed by the southern colonies of Georgia, Carolina, Maryland and Virginia. Here the Christmas season was a holiday in the true sense of the word. Feasting and merrymaking were common, but religious worship and prayer were not forgotten.
In sharp contrast to this happy celebration was the manner in which Christmas was marked in New England. Puritan leaders did their best to create a different conception of the day. Celebrations were declared pagan in origin, and it was believed such rites were out of keeping with the true spirit of the day. Their efforts were overcome after a number of years and New England yuletides gradually assumed a character more like those of old England.
Christmas in the middle colonies of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Delaware was celebrated in the manner that the colonists followed in their countries of origin. In addition to England, these colonies were populated by people from Germany, Holland and Sweden. The Germans, for example, brought to America the custom of using the Christmas tree, but the Quakers of Philadelphia limited their observance to religious ceremonies.
Family reunions marked the season in both the middle and southern colonies. Houses were crowded with welcome guests who were treated to the best of fowls, wines and sweetmeats.
Along the frontier Christmas was a season of active merrymaking which in places verged on rowdiness.
As time went on, Christmas in the various sections of the colonies became fused until there is today a considerable similarity of practices throughout the United States.

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Smart to Crochet Your Own Mittens



BE SMART! Crochet these mittens for that outdoor girl. The one laced up the back is "tops" in red, white and blue. The other is worked in one piece.
Pattern 2969 contains instructions for making mittens in small, medium and large sizes; illustrations of them and stitches; materials required; photograph of pattern stitches. Send your order to:

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'Spirit of '76'

This famous painting, in which the artist caught the spirit of the patriots who "fired and drummed it," was sketched and later painted by Archibald M. Willard. The artist, who lived through four of America's wars (1836-1918), was the creator of "Puck" comics after the Civil war. He originally made a humorous sketch for the opening of the Centennial exposition at Philadelphia in 1876.
A serious attempt to portray early American patriotism followed the cartoon, and the original now hangs in Abbott Hall library, in Marblehead, Mass.

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