WHEN \* \* SANTY GLAUSE had no experience. You think 'twill fetch her, don't yer?' "Sure," said Mr. Small, with convincing enthusiasm.

"And you'll stick by me, land me in the dory, and won't say nawthin' ter second mate ner none of the the hands?'

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"Sartin, I will." "Alvin," said me skipper, with emotion, "you're a brick. Mebbe I can do as much fer you some day. Have a cigar. Blessed if I ain't gittin' narvous already.'

It was the ice in the lower bay which threatened to wreck the captain's wonderful scheme. The Guess Again bat-tered and plowed her way through the floating fragments, but her progress was provokingly slow. Twilight found her some miles from the mouth of Orham harbor, and with the pack ice ahead im-

penetrable. "Tide's settin' in," said the exasperated skipper. "This stuff won't loosen up none till ebb, and that's an all-night Everything's up spout. I never did have no luck."

was jest wond'rin', captain,' drawled the moderate Mr. Small, "if twouldn't be possible ter set yer ashore in the dory somewheres along here. Seems ter me you said the lady lived down ter the north'ard end of the town, master, was rolling and pounding through the icy waters of Vineyard Sound. Capt. Peters, who had just and there seems ter be consider'ble open made the assertion above quoted, was seated on the locker at one side of her water over ter le'ward here. You'd have ter walk three or four mile, but bein' as it's so important-'

cabin, with his feet braced against the stationary table. His first mate, Mr. "Don't say another word, Alvin," cried the delighted skipper; "I don't see why I didn't think of that myself. Shows two Alvin Small, was seated opposite, with heads are better'n one, don't it? And I won't have têr walk no four mile, neither. D'yer see that inlet over there with the streak of open water through it? Well, that's Eel crick, and Ee crick is the outlet of the Clam pond. What's the matter with you rowin' me up the crick and the length of the pond-two mile, or mebbe three? Sophrony's house is only a little ways from the upper end of the pond."

"But won't the pond be froze over?" "'Tain't likely. It's salt water, and there ought to be a strong tide. Any-how, we'll resk it; come on.""

Capt. Peters went below to pack up his costume and presents, while Mr. Small superintended the anchoring of the schooner and getting the dory over side. When the skipper and he pushed off they left a second mate and crew bubbling over with curiosity. The bundles which

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"I cal'lated they'd puzzle yer," said the skipper, rather proudly; "but they're part of my scheme. Here's t'other part." He pulled from the locker beside him a canvas bag. Opening it he displayed

wooden horses, tin soldiers, pop guns and toys of various descriptions. "Now yer see, don't yer?" he said; "Santy Claus."

WENT WOOING

(Copyright.)

Fust time ever I see her, I says ter myself, 'Shadrach Peters,' says I,

'that's the lady you've been lookin' fer all these years.' I made up my mind

then that she was goin' ter be my wife, and what I once say I stand behind. You know me."

The coasting schooner Guess Again,

of Falmouth, Mass, Shadrach Peters,

his feet braced against the side of the

"Yes, sir-ee!" went on Capt. Peters;

"Sophrony Baker is all right. She's a widder, she is, and they tell me that

she's got two of the nicest boys ever

was. I ain't never seen 'em, 'cause last

September, when I was in Orham, they was visitin' their uncle over in Barn-

stable, but I feel it in my bones that

'twould be a pleasure ter be a father

"What I don't understand," said the

mate, slowly, "is what you're goin' ter do with them things."

"Them things" were prominently displayed on the cabin table. There

was a red coat, short and trimmed

with cheap fur; red trousers, fur-trim-

med like the coat; a big fur hat, fur-topped boots, and a white wig and long

white beard. Such was the collection

which called forth the mate's wonger.

table.

ter them boys.

"The best woman on Cape Cod or anywheres else; that's what I call her.

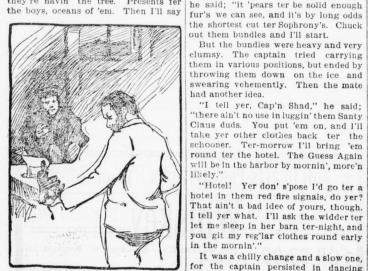
By JOE LINGOLN

"Santy Claus?" said the mate, who began to look as if he entertained suspicions of his superior's sanity.

"Yes, Santy Claus. When yer want ter please a girl yer tell her how pretty she is; ain't that so? When yer want ter please a woman yer tell her she looks younger than she ever did; ain't that so? Well, when yer want ter make a ten-strike with a mother, yer do yer best ter stand in with her children; ain't that so?"

Mr. Small said he wouldn't wonder if 'twas.

"You bet it is!" said the skipper, en-thusiastically. "Well, now yer understand I ain't never asked Sophrony if she'd have me, but, from what I've gathered in the h'af-dozen times I see her, I figgered that she wa'n't dead sot agin me. But I want ter sort of clinch things, yer understand, so this is my scheme. She told me once that she allers had a Christmas tree fer the children on Christmas Eve. Ternight'll be Christmas Eve, and my idee is ter run the Guess Again inter Orham harbor, 'stead of keepin' on ter Bos-ton. Then I'll take my bundles over ter the shore, lug 'em up somewheres near her house, rig up in my Santy Claus duds and bust in on 'em jest as they're havin' the tree. Presents fer



to the somewhat unusual spectacle of a nautical Santy Claus, seated upon his pack in the middle of a floating cake of ice, and expressing his opinion of the situation with fluent and blasphemous

> vigor. On Christmas morning, just after breakfast, Peter Baker, aged 11, com-monly known as "Spuds," was on his way to the Clam pond to test his new

rubber boots at the "Spring hole." "The "Spring hole" is the name given by the townspeople to a portion of the waters of the pond lying along the north-ern shore. It is half a mile long and nearly as wide, and does not freeze except in the very coldest weather.

Peter was accompanied by his bosom friend, whose age was nine, and who re-



"Are yer goin' ter put on the wig and whiskers."

joiced in the nickname of "Gizzard." This personage had been christened Hartwell Doane, but Hartwell, in the mouths of his playmates, soon shrank to "Hart," and from heart to gizzard is but a step. Peter's younger brother Abner accompanied the party, but, as he was only six years old and played with dolls, he didn't count.

The rubber boots were a Christmas present. Peter had wanted a mechan-ical locomotive and a blank cartridge pistol, but had received the boots and a 'Young People's History" instead. He was wroth, but the boots were there, so he felt it his duty to see how deep he could wade without "goin' over the tops of 'em," which has been the test of rubber boots since boyhood first made their acquaintance.

When the boys came in sight of the pond Abner ran on ahead, while Peter and Hartwell followed more leisurely, as becomes people of experience and big boots

"What's Ab yellin' about?" queried Hartwell.

Abner, standing at the top of the sand bluff overlooking the "Spring Hole," was dancing and screaming in great excitement.

"Santy Claus!" he screamed; "Santy Claus!"

"He b'lieves in him," said Peter, scornfully; "he ain't old enough ter know that Santy Claus is jest yer folks. What about Santy Claus, Ab?" he yelled. "He's down here. Hurry up! Quick!" "Sees somebody he thinks is Santy," commented Hartwell. "He don't know any better. Aln't nothin' but a kid. What is it, Abby? Jiminy Crickets! Spuds, look there."

The "Spring Hole" was steely blue in the morning sun, and two or +1.ree cakes of ice were drifting about its surface. One of these was floating about 50 yards from the shore below, and on it sat a figure dressed in red, with a fur hat and white hair and whiskers.

ength, but Clam pond appeared, unfor-"By gum!" said Hartwell; "I b'lieve it is Santy Claus!" tunately, to be frozen all over. It was dark by this time, and the mate advised "There ain't no such thing," said skipper; "Til see you some other day. Peter, "and you know it, Gizzard. It's There's a good time comin'." up the expedition for the night, but the

some feller dressed up." "He hollered ter me," said Abner.

'There, he's holler'n ag'in.' "What did he say, Spuds," said Hart-well, after they had listened for a mo-

ment.

zard. Who are you?" he called to the voyager.

The captain did not answer. He had acquaintances in Orham, and he much should not reach their ears. trying to invent a name, when Abner saved him the trouble.

"Ain't you Santy Claus?" called the latter. "Yes, that's it; that's who I am,"

cried Capt. Peters; "I'm Santy Claus." "What'll yer give us if we take yer

"Give yer? Give yer? Why, I'll give ver each a present out of my bag.'

"Is that bag full of presents?"

"Sartin."

"All right, then," cried the triumphant "Spuds," "we'll take yer off if yer'll give us the whole bag full!"

"The whole bag full!" gasped the in-dignant captain. "Why, you greedy little brats, I'll give yer what Paddy give the drum, that's what I'll give yer. The whole bag full! You come here and put me ashore mighty quick.

"Not unless you give us that bag of presents. If you're Santy Claus you can git lots more. Besides, you've been mighty stingy ter me and Gizzard this year. I didn't want yer old rubber boots and hist'ries, and he didn't want no worsted tippet, neither. Will yer give us the bag?'

"No!" roar'ed the captain. "All right. Pull fer the shore, Giz-

The dory's bow swung toward the each, and the captain changed his mind. It would be only a temporary loan, he argued. He could regain his property as

"I'll give 'em ter ye," he called." Come on, and take me off." "Not till we git them presents. We'll stay here, and you can undo the bag and

pitch 'em to us, one at a time." It was galling, but to argue was useless. The bag was opened, and the toys tossed one by one into the hands of the boys in the dory. The empty bag was then thrown in, and the bankrupt Santa Claus again demanded to be taken aboard the dory. But the crafty Peter knew bet-

ter than to allow it. He untied the rope from the dory's anchor and tossed the free end to the captain.

in. back inter the bag." As the boat's tow neared the beach.

bow touched the shore, Peter and Hart-



The bag was opened and the toys tossed out one by one to the boys in the dory.

well with the bag of presents between them leaped to the sand and scampered up the face of the bluff. By the time the captain had pulled his clumsy craft to land they were high up on the crest of the hill.

"You young rascals!" roared the irate

Another than Capt. Shadrach Peters would have returned to the schooner and have postponed his call upon the widow till a more auspicious occasion, but the skipper of the Guess Again was determination itself. He had said that he was

An hour later the stars were treated thought of somethin'! Stop rowin', Giz- Fisher's ditch. The knees of the red make his offer ahead of me. Will you trousers were scraped through on the frozen hummocks of Nickerson's field. It was a panting, ragged wreck of a en eyes at the mud-besp Santa Claus, who, after shaking off his draggled object before her.

preferred that the news of his mishap pursuers in the pine grove behind the Widow Baker's domicile, crept down in I don't know you. the shadow of the stone wall and dodged in at the kitchen door.

The kitchen was empty, and the skipper sat down in a chair and regained his breath. His temper was entirely gone, but it was some satisfaction to know that he had reached his destination unrecognized.

"They may find out about it afterward," he soliloquized; "but mebbe I'll have somethin' ter show fer it then." He heard voices in the parlor and sur-



The crowd now included men as well as boys and the shouting was tremen-dous.

the door and peeped through the crack, he saw that he was mistaken.

The widow was there, but the boys were not. She was talking with a man whom Peters did not know, but whom he dis-liked at first sight. He was a fat, smiling, smooth-shaven fellow, and a glib talker. It was plain that he was very well "Hold on ter that, and we'll tow yer satisfied with himself, and thought every-n," he said. "Abner, put them things one else shared his opinion. Then, too, his chair was much too near the widow's. Slowly the dory with the ice cake in and he beamed upon that lady in a manner which the captain considered disgust-

"Yes," said the smiling individual, "they cal'late he was an escaped lunatic, though where he come from nobody knows. He was dressed in some sort of an outlandish rig with fur onto it, and

the boys say he told 'em he was Santy Claus. Haw, Haw, ha!" "A lunatic!" exclaimed the widow; "how dreadful! I declare, I'm afraid ter stay here alone. Suppose he should run right inter this house." "Well, I thought of that, Sophrony

That's one reason why I called. Seem's if you needed a man ter protect yer, don't it? Now there wouldn't no luna-tics hurt yer if I was here."

The significant look which accompa-nied this speech fired the captain's soul. It was with difficulty that he held him-self in check, and waited for the next sentence.

"Now, Sophrony, I think a heap of you, and you know it. That's why I says to myself, 'Barnabas Badger,' says I, 'that business of Sophrony's has hung fire long enough. It's time you stepped round and made her yer offer.' So here I be, and I'm goin' to make it. Sophrony-

"Hold yer tongue!"

The widow screamed and sprang to her feet. Mr. Badger's chair, which had been tilted back upon its two rear legs, tilted still further and deposited its occupant in an ungraceful heap upon the floor. Capt. Shadrach Peters stood in the middle of the parlor carpet.

"You git!" roared the captain, addressing the prostrate Mr. Badger, and pointing to the door. "Lord! It's the lunatic!" gasped

the fallen one. "Oh. Barnabas. protect me!" screamed the widow.

who are you? faltered th

marry me?'

Mrs. Baker gazed with terror-stricken eyes at the mud-bespattered, be-"Marry you?" she repeated. "Why

"Don't know me! Sophrony Baker, can you look me in the face and say

you don't know me?" The captain's wig was over one eye, his false beard was pulled under the left ear, his nose was scratched and so were his cheeks.

"Well, well!" said the skipper, mournfully, "I knew I'd been through enough to turn a body's hair gray, but I'm blessed if I thought 'twould change me so my friends wouldn't know me." mised that they were those of the widow and her boys, but, when he tiptoed to on them trimmin's."

He tore off the wig and whiskers.

Now d'yer know me?" he roared. "Why-why, I do believe it's Captain Peters!" cried the astonished widow. "What does it all mean?" Then Capt. Shadrach Peters unfold-

ed a plain, unvarnished tale. He told of his scheme for pleasing and surprising the widow and her children. He told how he went astray in the dark, and, after several narrow esdark, and, after several narrow es-capes, stepped upon a brittle tongue of ice, which broke and floated with him out into the "Spring Hole." He feel-ingly narrated the story of the robbery of his bag of presents. He described the chase and its mishaps. But more than all he dwelt upon his undying de-

votion for Sophronia Baker. "But, Capt. Peters," said the blush-ing Sophronia, "how am I to know that

you really care for me?" "How?" said the dilapidated suitor. looking down at the remains of his costume. "How? Why, say, do you costume. "How? Why, say, do you think I'd be da—that is, d'you think I'd be fool enough ter go and git this way fer my health?" Then the ring was brought forth and

exhibited.

"Why it says 'From Shadrach to Sophronia,' " said the widow, reading the inscription. "I should like ter know, Capt. Peters," she added with a slight toss of her head, "why you took it for granted that I would marry you?'

"Why, Sophrony? Why, because I started out ter git yer, and I will git yer, no matter if there's 50 lubbers with 'offers' in the way. I've said that I'd marry you, an' I will, if I have ter



"Sophrony, I've always felt it in my hones that it would be a pleasure to be & father to them two boys."

wait 20 years. What I say I stand behind. You know me.'

hind. You know me." "Oh, well, then," said the matter-of-fact Mrs. Baker, "if that's the case then I'd better say yes at once and save time. But, really, Shadrach," she added, "I ought to tell you that the gentleman was only my Cousin Barna-bas, who'd been talkin' of buyin' my wood lot and who'd come over to offer me a price for it."

When the valiant Mr. Badger returned to his cousin's residence he was accompanied by a hundred men and boys armed with pitchforks, clubs and brickbats. They were prepared to capure the lu natic at all were not prepared to have that person meet them at the door with his havin' ter repeat my orders, and if arm about the plump waist of the wid-



"Now yer see, don't yer?" he said; "Santy Claus."

ter the widder, 'Mebbe you think old Santy didn't bring you nothin', but he d. Here, that's fer you.' "That," held out for ins did.

held out for inspection on the captain's sunburned paw, was somewhat showy but expensive ring. The mate's eyes expressed admiration and astonishment. The skipper continued:

"'That's fer you,' I'll say, 'on one condition. "Yer must take me with it." Hey, how is that?" "Bully!" said the mate.

"Ain't it bully? Yer see, the chil-dren will be awful tickled, and she'll be pleased to think I took so much show her that I don't mean ter be

'her, it looks ter me like a winnin' water ice at its best is treacherous bination. But, of course, I ain't stuff.

and I'll st But the bundles were heavy and very

"I was jest wood'rin', Captain, if 'twouldn't be possible ter set yer ashore in the dory somewheres along here."

the dory carried were conjectured to

contain anything from burglars' "swag"

returning to the schooner and giving

anxious lover would listen to no such

"I'll walk acrost the pond on the ice,"

he said; "it 'pears ter be solid enough

Eel creek was open for its entire

to smuggled whisky.

proposition.

thom hundle

clumsy. The captain tried carrying them in various positions, but ended by throwing them down on the ice and swearing vehemently. Then the mate had another idea.

"I tell yer, Cap'n Shad," he said: "there ain't no use in luggin' them Santy Claus duds. You put 'em on, and I'll take yer other clothes back ter the schooner. Ter-morrow I'll bring 'em round ter the hotel. The Guess Again will be in the harbor by mornin', more'n likely.'

"Hotel! Yer don' s'pose I'd go ter a hotel in them red fire signals, do yer? That ain't a bad idee of yours, though. I tell yer what. I'll ask the widder ter let me sleep in her barn ter-night, and you git my reg'lar clothes round early in the mornin'."

It was a chilly change and a slow one, for the captain persisted in dancing about on one leg and yelling adjectives to the cold. At length, however, he stood forth garbed in the red suit.

"Are yer goin' ter put on the wig and whiskers?" asked the mate.

"Yes, yes; I'll put 'em on. It's the asiest way ter lug 'em. Besides, mebbe they'll keep my ears warm. There, that's all right. What in time are yer grin-nin' at?"

"Oh, nawthin'," gasped the purple-faced Mr. Small; "I was only goin' ter -ha-he-sneeze."

He tramped off into the darkness, eaving his subordinate to roll about in the bottom of the dory with his hands

tightly clasped over his mouth. The captain's walk began well. The night air was crisp and bracing, the ice pains ter please them, and the ring'll appeared to be firm and to extend over the entire surface of the pond. But one stingy with her, and take it all ter- cannot see far on a dark night, and salt

'Said fer us ter take Gabe Blanchard's dory and come and git him ashore." ' "He swore, then," said Peter; "that



"By gum!" said Hartwell, "I b'lieve it is Santa Claus."

proves it ain't Santy Claus. Santy Claus wouldn't swear."

"Yes, he would," declared Abner, stoutly, "if he was floatin' round the Spring Hole on & cake of ice.'

"Let's go git him off, anyhow," said Hartwell, and they scrambled down the bluff. to the beach. Gabe Blanchard's dory, which he used for visiting his oyster bed, was anchored close to shore The boys climbed in, and the two older ones took the ores.

"He's settin' on his bag of presents, announced Abner, who was perched in the bow. "I bet there's all kind of dandy things in there.'

"Hold on a minute," said Peter; "I've

and what 1 behind. People knew him. He determined to wear the wig and whiskers, as they might serve to conceal his identity

should he meet any of his Orham ac quaintances.

Little Abner Baker had not fled with his elder brother and Hartwell, but had hidden behind Blanchard's fish shanty had determined in his small brain that the chance of gazing upon Santa Claus did not offer itself twice in a lifetime, and that he ought to make the best He resisted the longing to examine of it. the contents of the bag, and when Capt. Peters started down the lane that led to Mrs. Baker's, Abner followed him. Jimmie Ellis was leaning over his front fence, and Abner hailed him. "Come on, Jimmie," he screamed. "it's Santy Claus!"

Jimmie's yell of delighted surprise brought out five other little Ellis hopefuls, and the captain's following grew in numbers. He turned, saw his satellites, and quickened his pace.

"It's Santy Claus!" screamed the children. "Hooray!"

Otis Gaines' numerous progeny joined the troop. So did the Bellows youngsters. The captain's progress was becoming a riumphal procession. Ahead, where the houses were more numerous, windows

were opening and people were hurrying to their front gates. Children were racing their from all directions. The skipper left the ane and began to run across the fields. His whooping pursuers did likewise, and

the chase was on It led over hills and through bushes. Across the surface of frozen, flooded cranberry swamps, and over stone walls and fences. The crowd now included men as well as boys, and the shouting

was tremendous. The fur hat was left hanging on the wild cherry bough which scraped it off. One fur-topped boot stuck

champion thus appealed to.

"Never you mind. I ain't used ter



"But, Cap'n Peters, how am I to know that you really care for me."

you ain't out of here in one minute. you'll have a lesson in flyun' I say I stand behind. That's what folks say who knows me. Now, git!" "Oh, Barnabas, don't go!" pleaded

the trembling Sophronia. "I-I guess I'd better, so's to git

help," stammered Mr. Badger; "I guess-perhaps-I-had." The last word was spoken in the dining room. The protector had fled.

"Now then, Sophrony," said Capt. Peters, "I'm bounce your Peters, "I'm sorry to bounce your company in that fashion, but I ain't

As the disappointed crowd was leaving, Mrs. Baker saw her two sons slinking away with it, and called them back

"Peter, you and Abner come here this minute," she commanded.

"Are them your children, Sophrony?" asked the petrified captain; "them two. there?"

"Yes, certainly, Shadrach. I forgot you had never seen them. Boys, why don't you look at the captain?"

A smile, somewhat grim, but denoting intense satisfaction, slowly spread over Capt. Peters' face. "Sophrony," he said, "I've always

felt it in my bones that it would be a pleasure ter be father ter them two boys.

## He Helped Some One.

"No." he said. disconsolately. wasn't able to do anything for Christmas.

"Why not?"

"Oh, I only had a little money, and I put it on the wrong horse." "Well, don't feel downhea

don't feel downhearted, old man. Your money probably helped out somebody's Christmas all right enough."-Chicago Evening Post.

## Mince Pie History.

Christmas mince pie was originally a compound of the choicest spices and edible productions of the orient. It was eaten in commemoration of the offerings of the three wise men who carried rare spices, frankincense and myrrh from afar to the infant Christ born in the manger.

Not the Christmas Kind.

in the mud, when the foot which is been through what I've been through It is not the rainy-day stocking t adorned broke through the ice of Ziby jest to stand by and see another chap gets hung up at Christmas.—Judge. It is not the rainy-day stocking that

