



CHRISTMAS

LITTLE ORPHAN MARY'S CHRISTMAS



"SIGHED Mrs. Bonner, "we have a hundred dollars. Oh, well." And she tucked the money away in her blouse. "You don't seem very delighted, my dear," observed her husband. He laid down his pipe and put an arm around her shoulders. "What does Bess say?"

Mrs. Bonner read snatches of the letter. "And so," it finished, "as we shall be well on our way by Christmas, we are sending you two hundred dollars. I do hope you will get something you really want. We thought of the usual presents, but it seems you have them all and we get down so seldom nowadays that I have no idea what may be in your mind. Remember, now, no saving this. Spend it by Christmas for whatever will make you most happy. Bob sends his regards to you both. Your loving daughter, Bess."

"It has been a long time since we had a hundred dollars to spend right off without thinking, Mother," her husband said. "Now you should get yourself a fine new dress, and let me see—"

"A fine new dress, John? Why should I? No one ever troubles to come to see us." She turned her head away. "Why, Mother, you're crying."

"No—no, I'm not, John. I'm too old to act like a baby. Only I had so hoped—"

"I know. I had, too. It would have been nice to have had Bess back again for Christmas, and a tree, and dinner—"



"Maybe We Could Borrow One From the Orphan Asylum."

and well, folks around laughing. You know what I mean."

"It just doesn't seem like Christmas any more. Remember when Bess was a baby? Her first doll, and that year she got the cowgirl suit! She cried and cried, because she had thought it would have trousers instead of a skirt. I declare, there isn't anything I wouldn't give to have a little girl again—just for Christmas time."

"A little girl—with golden hair. That would be wonderful, wouldn't it?" Suddenly she slapped his leg. "By Jove, Mother, why couldn't we? With a hundred dollars—"

"John! Would you want to?"

"Why not? You said yourself there wasn't anything you would rather have."

"How nice it would be," she mused. "Maybe we could borrow one from the orphan asylum—"

"And buy her candles—"

"And a doll—"

"And a pink dress—"

"And a cowgirl suit—"

"Oh, my dear, it makes us both so young again! Let's do it."

Up went the holly and up went the tree. A wreath hung in the window; a plum pudding hung in the pot. Mr. Bonner strung the lights and Mrs. Bonner trimmed the tree—for little Orphan Mary was to arrive that afternoon.

Before things were half ready, she came—a shy little girl, with big, round eyes and soft yellow hair. Her severe little dress was a trifle short, her hat a bit too old, her coat very plain.

The woman from the orphanage made the necessary introductions, wiped Mary's nose, stuck the handkerchief in her pocket and cautioned her to "be a good girl." And then she was gone, and a scared little girl was trying very hard not to cry.

"Do come in and get your things off, Mary," said Mrs. Bonner. "We have a lovely tree, but you're not to look at it until after dark. I thought this afternoon you could help me make cookies. Would you like that?"

"O-oh," said Mary. "I'd love it!" Somehow this lady made her feel all warm, and not a bit afraid. "I know how to make cornmeal mush all alone," she volunteered.

"How nice! We must have some while you're here—or maybe you'd enjoy something else more," Mrs. Bonner added as an afterthought. "We're going to have turkey Christmas. Do you like turkey, Mary?"

"I guess so. I never had any. We have rooster for Christmas at the Home."

"Now before we make the cookies," Mrs. Bonner directed, "you must first wash your hands. Wait, I'll get you a towel."

"Oh!" Mary exclaimed, when the drawer was opened. "What gorgeous rags!"

"Those are silk pieces. I was going to make a pillow top, but then when we found out you were coming, I stuck them in there. Some of those pieces

belonged to my wedding dress, and I wouldn't have anything happen to them for the world." She closed the drawer and helped Mary dry her hands. "Now let's go make the cookies," she said. "Dad, do you want to watch?"

"That night when Mary had been tucked away in Bess's old room, the kind-hearted couple sat for a long time in front of the fireplace, talking.

"I am so glad we could get her for a few days before Christmas," Mr. Bonner remarked. "How her eyes popped when she saw the tree! And when we told her that on Christmas morning there would be presents under it for her, it seemed too wonderful for her to believe."

"Yet I noticed a wistfulness in her eyes," his wife answered, "as though something was keeping her from being completely happy."

"She still feels a little strange, perhaps. It will pass."

"I hope so. I almost wish she could stay always. It will be hard to give her up when the time comes."

Mrs. Bonner was surprised to find, next morning, that Mary had closed and locked her door. She answered her knock, however, and appeared promptly for breakfast, apparently perfectly happy. Yet Mrs. Bonner was worried to notice that whenever Mary had an opportunity, she would slip away to her room, lock the door, and stay there until she was called.

They spent one day in town shopping, and on the next made all preparations for Christmas dinner. On Christmas eve they went to church, and heard the old familiar carols. And then Orphan Mary went to bed in high excitement, and Mr. and Mrs. Bonner piled the gifts around the tree.

Christmas morning brought a snow-storm and dark skies. Mrs. Bonner slept lightly, and at the first sound of Mary stirring she got up. A few minutes later she came back to her husband. "John, what did you do with my silk pieces?"

"Why, I haven't seen them, Mother."

"Well, they're gone. Do you suppose—? Mary?"

"Yes'm. Merry Christmas!" Mary came out into the hall. "Merry Christmas, Mr. Bonner."

"The same to you, dear. Mary, do you know what became of my silk pieces?"

"Why, yes'm, I—"

"You what?"

"I'd lots rather you didn't ask me, Mrs. Bonner," she said appealingly. "Please!"

"My lovely silk pieces, and you take them without saying a word! You know that's stealing, don't you?" Mary nodded and began to cry. "And yet you took them, Mary?"

"Yes'm."

"Well, that settles it. There's one thing I won't have around, and that's a thief. Get dressed, both of you. John will drive you back."

"Now, mother—"

"Do you want a thief around? No telling what she might take next. Get your things, Mary. Hurry!"

Orphan Mary turned quickly and did as she was told. By the time John had the engine warmed up she climbed in silently beside him and they started off.

Mrs. Bonner peeked around a corner of the parlor curtain as they went. Then she turned and looked at the tree. The presents were in a heap at the foot, but the tinsel was now a mockery. She sank down on a stool and idly counted them over.

And then she noticed one that had not been there last night. It was a little back from the others, and more crudely wrapped. She opened it, and there was a pillow, all made from the

quilt pieces. She ran to the window, but the car was quite out of sight.

"Oh," cried Mrs. Bonner, "that poor child! She couldn't stand not having a present to give in return, and so she made for me the one thing I said I wanted." She hugged the pillow close, and her tears spotted one of the best pieces. After a while she heard the car drive into the garage, and her husband's step on the porch. She ran to meet him.

"Look, John! Look what Mary made for me. And I called her a thief! Can't we get her back? She counted so much on this Christmas, and now I've spoiled it all!"

"I wouldn't say that quite, Mother. It can still be the happiest Christmas ever."

"What do you mean?"

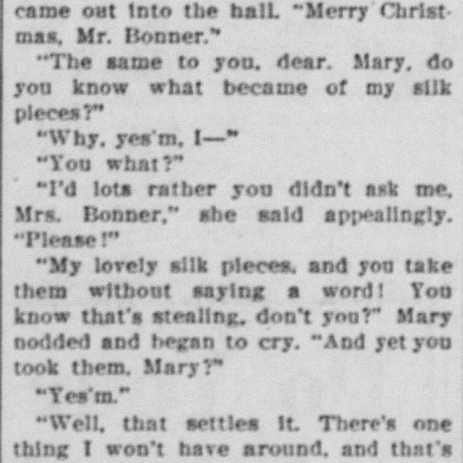
"Well, you see, when we got to the orphanage I didn't have the heart to let her go. So instead I went in and asked them for adoption papers. If you want to, we can just sign these up and keep her always."

"Then, where's Mary?"

"Why, she's out in the garage."

Mrs. Bonner threw her arms around his neck. "Oh, John, you darling! What a glorious Christmas!"

And they went out together for little Orphan Mary.



"How Her Eyes Popped When She Saw the Tree."

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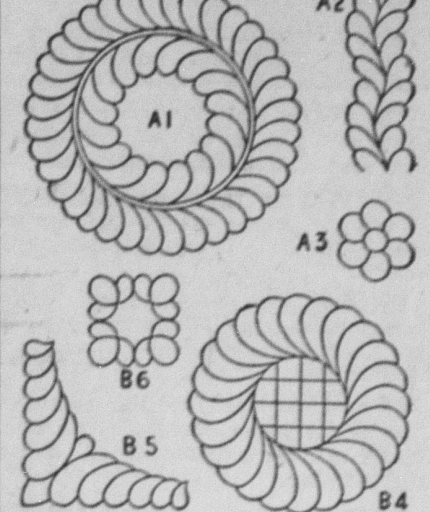
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PERFORATED DESIGN FOR QUILT MAKERS

By GRANDMOTHER CLARK



Quilt makers realize the beauty of a finished quilt depends upon the patches used, the beauty in the patchwork design, and, most important, the quilting. If the quilting design is not accurately reproduced on the material it is impossible to quilt neatly and clearly. Many quilts are never finished, because the worker has no pattern or means to transfer all the quilting lines accurately. There are several ways of transferring quilting patterns to cloth, but the most approved and successful method is stamping the design through a perforated pattern, with stamping powder. This is the simplest and most economical way, and produces results that make quilting interesting. Each stamping is the same, and perfect. These patterns are already perforated on bond paper, and good for many stampings. Each stitch is indicated on the lines of the design, and the stamping can be brushed off when quilting is finished, leaving the work neat and clean.

Grandmother Clark's package No. 33A contains perforated patterns of the designs shown, also stamping powder and full directions how to use them. Sizes of patterns are as follows: A1 Feather Circle, 12 inch; A2 Feather Border, 3 inch; A3 Motif, 3 1/2 inch; B4 Feather Circle, 9 1/2 inch; B5 Feather Corner, 7 inch; B6 Feather Square, 4 inch.

If you want your quilting to look right, send 15 cents to our quilt department and receive all of these, Lot 33A six perforated patterns by mail postpaid.

Address—Home Craft Co.—Dept. "D"—Nineteenth and St. Louis Ave., St. Louis, Mo. Enclose a stamped envelope for reply when writing for any information.

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DOAN'S PILLS

Western Newspaper Union.

Christmas Trails and Gales

by Florence Harris Wells

NOW that she was really at home for Christmas Katharine Mann found herself wishing that she had invited some of her young city friends to accompany her. Katharine was working on the last few rows of the scarf she was knitting for her mother's Christmas gift and her thoughts were as busy as her fingers.

She had thought it was going to be too stupid in the little bay shore village for her friends. But father and mother and brother Jack had all been so sincerely delighted to see her that she had decided a home was after all the only place in which to spend Christmas and boarding and rooming houses could not compare, no matter how congenial the young folks there might be. Still she did wish Fred Aldrich might be here, too.

Fred had grown to be quite a part of her life she was learning now that she had been away for two days. They had been boarding at the same place for six months. It was a jolly group at that boarding house. Katharine hoped they were missing her, especially Fred, she admitted to herself. An idea she would not have had any one surmise—no, not for anything.

Thirteen-year-old Brother Jack came dashing into the room:

"Shall we go get the Christmas tree, sister?"

"All right," Katharine answered quickly. It was always an adventure to cut across the ice-covered bay to the pine woods on the other side and select exactly the right tree from the abundance to be found there. Jack would chop it down and together they would tie it securely on the big sled. It was easy enough to bring it back, especially when the ice was as smooth as it was this year; for they would skate over and back.

It was two miles across to the pine woods which they reached in much less time than it usually took them. They did not often have such a smooth skating surface. It was time well gained; for it took much longer than was customary to find just the right sized tree to fit into the space allotted it in their living room. The short December day was already drawing to a close when the two found themselves once more on the ice heading for home.

"We'll have to hurry if we get home before dark, Jack."

"Don't I know it!" Jack answered. "Look! It's snowing."

Sure enough the air was filled with fine, glistening particles.

"We've got to hustle now, Kath. You know you're plain stuck if you get

caught on the ice in a snow storm."

On they glided holding firmly to the sled rope. The sharp snow granules became more numerous. The air was filled with them, pelting and biting their faces and making the skating less and less easy. The cracks and holes in the ice were soon covered. More than once Jack and Katharine found themselves clutching the air in wild contortions to keep their balance.

Suddenly Katharine's skate caught in a hole. In falling she hit Jack's skate and they both went sliding and sprawling on the snow-covered surface. The sleigh, with the tree on it, sped past them, carried on by the impetus of its weight and the flying start it had.

The two skaters gathered themselves together, regaining their feet in time to see the runaway sleigh hit a fisherman's hut. The hut collapsed. They watched two much befurred, and irate men disentangle themselves from the wreck and glare around to see what it was all about.

Katharine and Jack sped towards them as fast as the skating would permit.

"We're so sorry," Katharine began. "But the snow covered the cracks in the ice and my skate caught . . . she got no further. A pair of black eyes under the huge fur cap were mischievously twinkling:

"So, you're our undoing, Katharine Mann. I came up here on your trail but I didn't expect you to upset my plans in this fashion."

Katharine had somewhat recovered her poise:

"How did you get here, Fred Aldrich? I thought I left you in town?"

"You did. But what's a city without your gay self in it? I decided to accept uncle's proffered invitation to fish; so I followed you home. You know my aunt and uncle?"

"Of course. We're old friends," Katharine beamed her brightest smile upon the uncle. "But I didn't know you were relatives. This is my brother, Jack."

"Let's go home and get the tree up. It's almost quit snowing," Jack offered unceremoniously.

"Let's," the uncle added, but he smiled as though well pleased. "Your mother has already asked us for Christmas dinner, Katharine. It was to have been a surprise."

"A pretty fine one I'd say," Fred's voice sounded very gay and happy. "That tree deserves special attention in my opinion. So off we go, over the ice and through the snow."

And somehow it proved much easier going now than it did before—especially to Katharine.

A CASE OF COMPETITION

"IF SOME one would only take us out and exercise us!" growled Blitz.

"Here we stand in the stables month after month and Santa hardly comes near us. I've almost forgotten how to race with a cloud or land on a roof."

"I know it," agreed Donder from his stall. "For three years now our master has taken his presents around the world in a flying machine.

"I'm fed up with this dull life!"

"We're no good to anyone," declared Comet. "I wonder if the children miss us?"

There was a long silence in the stables. Then suddenly the doors were flung wide. A little round man in a red coat bounced in.

"Come on, come on!" he called. "Jump fast into the harness. We're going on our rounds in five minutes! I've had ten million letters from children saying they can't possibly go to sleep Christmas eve unless they hear my reindeer pounding on the roof. Off with you!"

The sleigh zipped out of the stable in a twinkling. "After all," said Santa, "I think my reindeer are better than airplanes. They never have engine trouble. Get up, Donder! Go on, Blitz!"

The bells jangled, the reins slapped, the sleigh swept forth on its age-old journey.—Martha Banning Thomas.

Western Newspaper Union.

Use Sleigh Bells for Jolly Christmas Game

HERE is a new and exciting game to play at a Christmas party. First borrow a set of sleigh bells. They are not as easy to find as in the old days. Find a string with tuneful, varying notes if you wish the game to jingle to the full measure of holiday fun.

The idea is simply this: It is possible to suggest, then control the action of a person who does not know what is in your mind, but must find out through the sound of the bells. Here is the way to do it:

Send one of the guests from the room. The remainder decide what he must do. For instance—go to a certain table, pick up a book, take it to another table and place it near the lamp. Here are four separate acts in succession.

The person outside is called back. Somebody has been chosen to be the manipulator of the bells. He must use a nice judgment in using them, ringing softly when the act approaches what is in the minds of all; ringing loudly as the perplexed player moves away. Try it. Use subtle gradations of sound to guide your experiment. Without a word being spoken he will at last be guided to do what has been secretly agreed upon. Loud ringing when he is far from his goal or going from it, soft, soft, barely audible when he is near the doing of what is required.—Martha Banning Thomas.

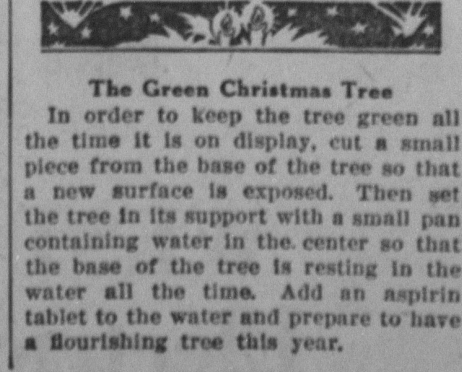
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"Maybe We Could Borrow One From the Orphan Asylum."

The Green Christmas Tree

In order to keep the tree green all the time it is on display, cut a small piece from the base of the tree so that a new surface is exposed. Then set the tree in its support with a small pan containing water in the center so that the base of the tree is resting in the water all the time. Add an aspirin tablet to the water and prepare to have a flourishing tree this year.



"How Her Eyes Popped When She Saw the Tree."