

Wilson didn't win the West; Hughes lost it, and William Allen White shows how inevitable the result was in "Who Killed Cock Robin?", an article of extraordinary interest in this week's issue of

Collier's
THE NATIONAL WEEKLY

CHILD WRITES PLEA FOR FIREMAN PAPA

Mary Doran Asks Chief to Send Him Home for Christmas

HER QUERY AN ARGUMENT

Mary Doran has addressed to the chief of the Bureau of Fire a communication involving a subject of personal importance. Being youthful, "eight years past," as she proudly admits, Mary's experience as a correspondent is a brief one, and she does not adhere at all times to accepted formalities in her letter-writing. But being feminine, Miss Doran "wants what she wants when she wants it," and she makes known her wants in query form.

Chief Murphy, being masculine and a fireman of twenty-two years' experience to boot, may popularly be regarded as lacking in sentiment. At any rate, he has permitted Miss Doran's letter to obtain publicity. It may be that communications bearing upon the subject of "Miss Doran's mischievous seldom find their way to the chief of the Bureau of Fire. They may be looked upon by the citizen public of Philadelphia as none of his business. Such letters may be puerile in composition and of no concern whatever to a busy, workaday world. But their rarity must be taken as excuse for their publication and in extenuation of Chief Murphy's action in his promise of proper attention in his reply to his little correspondent.

Miss Doran's letter reads:

Dear Mr. Chief—My papa is a fireman. He is on Engine 20. He has been a fireman for ten years. I am eight years old and I have two little brothers. We want papa home for Christmas. He is always at the firehouse and we only see him once in a while. We haven't had him home with us on Christmas that I can remember. Sometimes he comes in for dinner while we are at school, so we don't see him like other little girls do their papas. You are the chief. Can't you let us have papa home with us when Christmas comes just like the other little girls in our street? It don't seem like Christmas ought to be without papa. He just hurries in and goes right out again and never has time to play with us. We want him to see our tree and have dinner with us and all that.

Won't you let him home for Christmas just this once?

Maybe you have little girls of your own and know how they like to have you home on Christmas. I like presents and candy, but oh! I'd rather have papa home with us just this one Christmas than all the rest. Please, chief, won't you do it?

Yours respectfully,
MARY DORAN,
788 De Kalb street, West Phila.

There is Mary's letter. It was received in the morning's mail by Chief Murphy. Mary has worded it with such childish naivete that he must be an adamant fireman who would not answer its simple appeal.

Chief Murphy is a stoic on duty. He is human, however, when he is off duty. Under his fireman's uniform and there is something besides formality in his makeup, as the men of the Fire Bureau know by experience and contact.

It is only among those citizens who take no interest in the bureau, save when they need it to protect their lives or property from fire, that ignorance of the department and the conditions therein prevails.

PERTINENT QUERIES

Little Mary has done what those citizens in their apathy have not done. She wants to know why her father, just because he is a fireman, is not permitted to be her father in the same sort of way as the fathers of other little girls who are her neighbors and playmates.

And Christmas is coming. It is a holiday for family reunion in the homes of those other little girls, and has been as far back as their memory goes. But Mary's restriction—she is only eight years old, to be sure, but in all of that span the little home on De Kalb street has never once been brightened by the presence of Hoseman Doran. Mary doesn't understand why a big city like Philadelphia makes its firemen work twenty-four hours every day when men in all other fields of employment are allowed time to be with their little girls and boys.

So in her juvenile quandary she puts the question fairly up to the man she holds responsible, "Mr. Chief Murphy."

An older person might differently. He might raise the question of the right of a fireman to have family ties. Or, having set up a household, why should he remain in the Bureau of Fire at all, thereby conceding that at this Christmas season, or at any other time, in fact, it is not proper to consider Philadelphia firemen or their lot.

But again obtrudes—in the lines of Mary Doran's letter—another feminine trait: She obstinately persists in asking for what she desires, and she appeals for the granting of

that wish to the person in whom she believes the power of compulsion is vested.

No she adds to her original request a postscript in which she pleads for "just this once."

To her infant heart that one Christmas Day with "Papa" means, as she writes, more than the tree, more than the presents. It means Christmas itself. She doesn't know that in fifty-one other American cities the firemen are today enjoying more hours of liberty than are granted in this "birthplace of liberty." She doesn't know that in nearly forty of those cities the firemen of the same rank as Hoseman Doran receive more pay for less work than her father and the 899 other fathers in the ranks of the Bureau of Fire. They don't teach those facts out in St. Agatha's School, where Mary and her thirteen-year-old sister, Rose, and her brother, Daniel, now twelve years old, are pupils. Many persons older than Mary are just beginning to realize the truth of these conditions and some have appealed to the Mayor and to Councilmen to better them.

MAYOR SMITH A FATHER

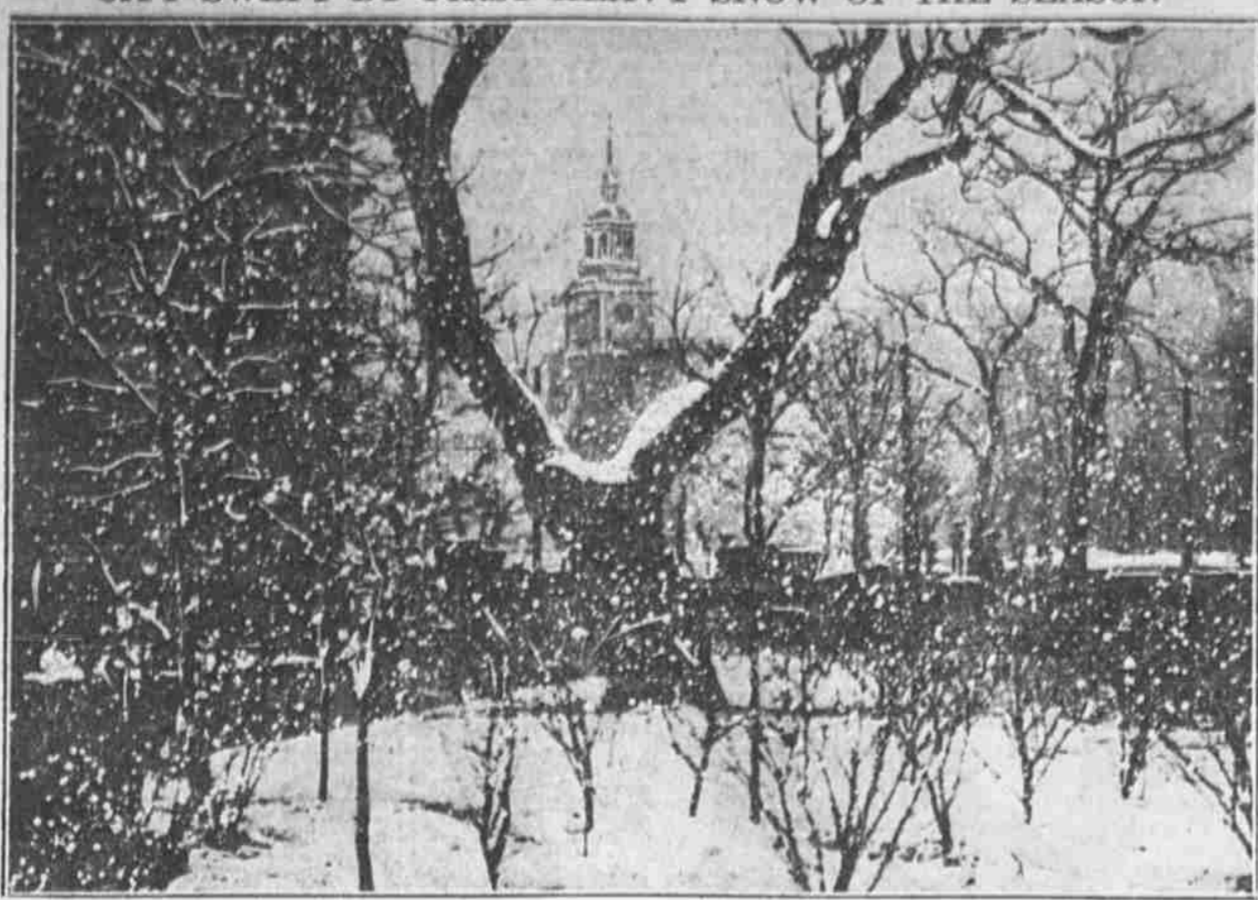
Mayor Smith is a father. He has a little daughter. Her name is Elizabeth and she is about Mary's age. The Mayor and Elizabeth will probably enjoy Christmas together in the South country residence at Glenside. Mary's father has spent all the Christmas days that Mary can remember at the station of his company.

He is now located at the station of Engine Company No. 29, on Tenth street north of Market. The men of the Fire Bureau are seeking to bring about a change in the working hours of the service, coupled with a salary reorganization, that will permit them to have more time with their families than the three one-hour meal periods that now comprise the daily allowance until the sixth consecutive day arrives and brings its twenty-four hours off duty.

Mary Doran, youthful as she is, knows what hardship this system has wrought in the home of the fireman-parent. It isn't like home, and never is the unlikeliness more accentuated than at Christmas. She has never written to Chief Murphy before and her letter is somewhat lacking in its address and language. But her sincerity is unquestioned, and it may appear that in addressing Chief Murphy she was misaddressing her letter.

There is a possibility that Mary Doran's letter would have reached its proper destination if the superscription had read: "To the citizens of Philadelphia."

CITY SWEEP BY FIRST HEAVY SNOW OF THE SEASON



Looking toward Independence Hall from Washington Square through the mixture of rain and snow.

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CHILD SAVED FROM FIRE

Mother Rescues One, Forgets Second in Smoky Kitchen

Desire to save her six-months-old daughter Rose from probable suffocation during a fire at her home, 1641 South Oakney street, caused Mrs. Eva Miller to forget Jennie, another daughter, three years old, who was in the kitchen.

After reaching the street Mrs. Miller realized that the other child was in danger and shouted for help. District Detective Cohen, who was passing, groped his way into the house and carried the girl out. She was uninjured. The fire, which was of unknown origin, caused a loss of \$300.

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BANG! AND BURGLAR SEES AURORA BOREALIS

Householder, Awakened, Hurls Chair and "Vaudeville Act" Comes to Sudden End

All that Joseph Lynch needed to make the robbery of the home of John McLaughlin, at 3438 Hurley street, as theatrical as his histrionic semibillies seemed to require was a stringed orchestra. With that—and an audience—it would have been a vaudeville act.

Lynch, according to McLaughlin clattered and banged at the rear kitchen window for five minutes last midnight before he finally jimmied an entrance. Then, with a bag of heavy, rattling, clinking burglar tools and some bags for loot, he tip-toed into the dining room. Here was where the stringed orchestra was needed—to accompany the vaudevillean entrance with a crescendo plink, plink, plink, plink. McLaughlin awakened, lay in bed upstairs the while wondering, he says, at the violence of the first winter storm. Then he heard noises of breaking dishes and the slamming and banging of buffet drawers mingled with the metallic jangling of silverware.

McLaughlin, in his night clothes and barefooted, picked up a small chair and sneaked downstairs.

As Lynch was making an exit through

the back window, the chair struck him on the back of the head. He studied the aurora borealis and believed he knew something of the procession of the equinoxes by the time the police arrived from the Front and Westmoreland streets station.

Magistrate Wrigley this morning held Lynch without bail for court. Silverware and jewelry were found in his pockets, some of which had been taken from another house in the block where McLaughlin lived, according to the police. Lynch said he was thirty-four years old and lived at 150 West Westmoreland street.

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WIRES FIRE COUNTRY HOME

Electricity Blamed for Blaze in Residence of Mrs. E. K. Rowland

Many engine companies in the suburbs groped and skidded about the country roads today looking for the residence of Mrs. Edward K. Rowland, which caught on fire from crossed electric wires.

The quick work of servants, with assistance from the chemical engine of the Wayne Fire Company, eventually extinguished the fire after about \$1000 damage had been caused.

The Rowland home is known as Rockrose and is now occupied by Mr. and Mrs. H. George Brooke. Among others entertained at Rockrose was Dr. Constantine Dumba, former Ambassador from Austria-Hungary. Mr. Rowland died about a year ago.

Cops on Scent of Brandy Thieves

WINSTED, Conn., Dec. 12.—Thieves whose identity has not been determined tapped the casks at the still of Elmer Alderman, in Burlington, and drew off 100 gallons of older brandy and got away with the load. Constables suspect "parties addicted to strong drink," but admit it is a good deal like "looking for a needle in a hay mow."

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