

on the MAIN STREET

Dec 24/68



Turning back the pages of memory at the Christmas season of the year recalls the days when this framed hand woven motto decorated many a parlor wall, "God Bless This Home." When the Christmas season rolled around the words seemed to take on special significance for Mother always seemed to find twigs of holly or small branches of evergreen to entwine the motto. Remember when she brought out the sewing basket and how the steel needles clicked as row upon row of yarn rounded out the toes and the heels of a pair of long socks and how a different color of yarn was used to decorate the socks with initials.

Remember how the children were allowed to hang up their longest pair of stockings near the chimney where Santa Claus was sure to come down. Then how boys and girls were ordered to bed and how tenderly they were tucked under flannel sheets and crazy patch quilts and how each child was given a warm and tender good night kiss and to "sleep tight and don't let the bugs bite . . ."

Then remember when all was quiet how Mother pulled out the parcels big and small and placed them in the long stockings, with an orange and an apple in the toes and a horn sticking out the top.

Presents were different in the dim and distant past. There were toy drums, colored horns, hard candy, sponge candy, licorice in the form of chewing tobacco with a tin stamp to resemble the real plug of tobacco, mouth organs, large spinning tops set in motion by pulling a piece of string or pushing on a spring and these tops played a beautiful piece of music. Then there was also the small harp which tingled the lips as it was played and colorful story books, a school slate and the hard slate pencil and a one foot ruler. The boys received Indian rubber balls and the girls loved their dolls. Home knitted stockings, mittens and mufflers were useful and perhaps the girls received a dress

a toque and a pair of moccasins and a small hand sleigh.

Mother sat by with face beaming with joy and after the family had settled down to play with their presents she then rushed about the kitchen and soon the family sat down to a Christmas dinner and what a dinner! A well stuffed bird, thick brown gravy, cranberries, luscious preserved crab apples stuck with cloves, red shivering jelly, deep pumpkin pie topped with an inch of cream the usual pickles and all the vegetables, a huge Christmas steamed plum pudding and a large cup of strong tea.

After Mother bundled up her small brood and sent them out to play with their sleds and skates, dishes were scoured and piled away and if there was time two or three tunes usually hymns were played on the high backed organ.

Supper over and tired in limb and body, kids again were tucked in their beds — then Mother sat down in the kitchen rocker and took down her well thumbed family Bible and once more Christmas was over.

It had been a long, hard day but Mother was satisfied and happy.