



SANTA A LADY? . . . That's good for a laugh, even to the Japanese. When 14 Santa Claus uniforms arrived at the American Red Cross Far Eastern Area warehouse in Tokyo, Miss Margery Tonge, an ARC employee from Australia, tried one on and got a big hearty "Ho-Ho-Ho" from two Japanese warehouse workers. The suits, destined for use at ARC Christmas parties in U. S. military hospital wards in Japan, Korea, Okinawa and the Philippines, were made by Red Cross volunteers in Baltimore, Boston, Toledo, Washington, D. C., and Youngstown, Ohio.



By Elizabeth Shafer

It was the day before Christmas. The man at the lot said, 'I can give you this bigger tree for the same price, lady.'

Mary Carstairs said quickly, 'No, thank you, this is just the right size. Will you put it in the car for me, please?'

The man set the tiny, perfectly formed fir tree on the back seat of the car. 'There you are, lady. Merry Christmas.'

Mary Carstairs looked at him, startled. 'Thank you,' she said. She got into the car and drove off, a young woman with dark sad eyes, her face unnaturally thin.

Purposeful

At Hempstead's department store, she moved slowly, purposefully through the crowded, festive aisles. When she came to the counter with the Christmas decorations laid out in shining rows of red and green, blue, pink, silver and gold, she waited quietly until a clerk came.

'I want six of the small blue ones,' she said, pointing. 'Six of the red, six of the gold.'



'They're cheaper by the dozen, ma'am. Wouldn't you like to make that two dozen all together?'

'No. Thank you. That's all I need.'

'Wouldn't you like some tinsel—or a box of artificial snow?'

'No. Just these.'

'We have a good bargain on lights.'

'No. Thank you.'

'How about a little angel for the top of the tree? On special sale, since tomorrow is Christmas.'

Mary Carstairs stared at the delicately featured, smiling angel with the tinsel wings. "Yes, yes, — I'll take that."

Holy Air

She moved quickly through the pushing crowds, carrying her parcel. She put the ornaments into the back seat of the car, beside the little tree, and drove through the streets of the town. Windows were gay with holiday offerings, the streets swarmed with laughing, last-minute shoppers. Decorations were hung across the street: loops of evergreen, wreaths and candles, gigantic candy canes. A loudspeaker was blaring, 'Joy to the World.'

Mary Carstairs drove out of town, past the houses with their reindeer and Santa's sleigh on the front lawns, the three wise men, the shepherds, and the manger. She did not look at the manger.

It was dusk, and already there were lighted candles and wreaths with colored lamps in the windows of the houses she just passed. Through the picture windows she could see the families—mothers and fathers, boys and girls—laughing and eager, decorating the trees . . .

A Mission

She drove on, and at the end of the street she turned the car onto the side road leading away from the town and through the carved pillars with their iron gates.

'Memorial Cemetery,' the sign said. 'Gates close at 5:30 p.m.'

When she had come to the place, she stopped the car and got out. She carried the little tree and the package of ornaments across the grass, between the headstones. Kneeling, she began to work, swiftly, utterly absorbed. She set up the tree, adorned it with the ornaments of red and blue and gold. At the very last, she took the sweet-faced angel with the tinsel wings and fastened it securely atop the tiny tree.

She stood up, brushing her hands on her coat, and looked at her handiwork, looked at the little headstone which read, "Mary Louise, infant daughter of Charles and Mary Carstairs, born February 5, died September 21."

She stared dry-eyed at the words cut into the stone, then turned and walked slowly back to the car. In the car she hesitated, looked back.

The little tree stood bravely in the fading light, its ornaments gleaming against the softness of the tree.



DR. W. C. ARNOLD
HAILEYBURY

Christmas Is Not "X's" Birthday

Today is the day of commercialization and advertising. Throughout the year we are bombarded with ads and promotions of one kind or another proclaiming the merits of everything from shoelaces to \$10,000 autos. Everybody has something to sell and Christmas is the biggest selling season of all.

In our efforts to buy and sell, we too often lose sight of the true meaning of Christmas. We seem, some of us, to forget who's birthday it is. Evidence for this can be found in the word 'Xmas.' It's easier to say, and much easier to write on an ad layout or sign. However we are not celebrating X's birthday. Who was, or is 'X?' Put the 'Christ' back into Christmas.

Gift Giver Has Different Names

The Christmas-time gift-giver has many different names in the various lands of the world, and even in Russia youngsters annually await the arrival of two legendary benefactors.

Kolya (Nicholas) is supposed to go about Russia on Holy Night, leaving tiny wheat cakes on the windowsills and in addition there is 'Babushka' who also gives gifts to little boys and girls in repentance, a legend says, for supposedly mis-directing the Magi on their trip to Bethlehem)

Italian Children await the arrival of 'Lady Befana,' a fairy queen who presents gifts. Some Spanish children believe the gifts come directly from the child Jesus — 'el Nino Jesus.'

Don't Overdo It

Be careful not to overdo your outdoor decorations. Your house and yard might end up looking like an amusement park. Even the most expensive decorations will have this effect if not used in good taste. Harmony and simplicity are the key words in planning an attractive outdoor display.



ALGONQUIN MEMORIAL WORKS

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HI-WAY SERVICE STATION

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Christmas Wishes

With sincere appreciation for your loyalty and patronage during this past year . . . we extend to you our heartiest wishes for a very Merry Christmas!

Morissette Manufacturing & Sales LIMITED

OSborne 2-3344

HAILEYBURY