

# Color Christmas gray for Paul, the pusher

by Dian Kennedy

A boy we shall call Paul, 20, walks the snow-carpeted streets, bypassing Christmas shoppers weighted down with gifts. Children run past him following a street-corner Santa Claus and above him colored lights are strung, giving light to shop windows gazed at by old couples with red faces, beaten by the winter wind. He is there, among those people but indifferent and insensitive to the spirit which envelops them and the tinsel and lights of the fantasy Christmas world don't catch his eye.

an instant that Christmas is approaching, he quickly forces it from his mind; sentimentality plays no part in his life. Paul is a pusher.

Christmas means little to the customers Paul deals with. They are not people; like Paul, they are phantoms, denizens of a world of drug-induced fantasy. Paul is a nonentity in the real, very personal world of Christmas.

### Typical start

Paul's beginnings with drugs could be considered typical. Curiosity played a part as did the desire to be part of his scene, to be im-

portant at an age when you're neither child nor adult. Drugs provided kicks—something new and as with many before and after him, he thought he would never get 'hooked'. He did.

Money is constantly on Paul's mind. It's a means to what may be his own end. A user himself, pushing means easy money for his own pills, tablets, capsules, hard drugs such as heroin, and "grass." Unlike those around him, Paul chooses to ignore the generosity of others.

"Christmas is a phony time. It's the time when all the hypocrites try to buy back all the hypocrisies of a year. I'm not playing their game."

### Free this time

But Paul does give with a vicious, devious motive. Last year his "gift" to a 14-year-old junior high school student was "turning him on" to acid, (LSD).

It was "free" but it represented an investment in the future. Paul's "generosity" has paid off; the boy, now 15, buys in quantity and has turned on several friends to help pay for his growing habit. To avoid detection, the boy has left home and will spend his Christmas like any other day, "tripping" in the basement room he shares with five other "heads." The

world of parents, Christmas trees and giving is gone.

Paul will be busy pushing in the peak Christmas period. His "home" is a bleak, one-room flat. Grey walls enclose a bed, a chair and little else. The windows are without curtains and the floors without rugs. It isn't a home—homes are a part of the past. No sign of the season allows him to remember. His Christmas giving is restricted to "laying" dope on his friends who in turn provide him with customers. He still "turns on" new customers to ensure future business.

### Exploiters

It will be a lonely Christmas for him, but he won't realize it. Friends, enemies, passing acquaintances want him for one purpose only—to exploit him as he exploits. "People really aren't a necessity. I have a few friends and that's enough."

Is it enough? And are those faceless phantoms who come and go from his environment, friends? His is an unemotional existence. One glimpse at emotion—one regret... and his world becomes a nightmare. He does have one friend—dying from speed

(methedrine), who needs medical attention. And in Paul there's a resignation that there isn't money to be wasted on medicine. You have to look after yourself first. He's learned that.

What is abnormal for us is normal for Paul, and for him Christmas is just another bad day in a continuing bad scene. Christmas is a time of man's involvement with man, but involvement is a stranger to Paul. Men are shapeless forms, passing him on Christmas day as on any other day of his life—leaving him behind.

## It's Plum Pudding time

- |                                                                   |                                   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| ½ cup sugar                                                       | ¾ cup chopped mixed candied fruit |
| 3 cups all-purpose flour — unsifted                               | ½ cup chopped nuts                |
| 1 teaspoon baking soda                                            | 1 apple grated                    |
| 1½ teaspoon salt                                                  | 1 cup finely chopped suet         |
| ½ teaspoon each ginger, cloves and nutmeg                         | 1½ cups milk                      |
| 1 teaspoon cinnamon                                               | ½ cup molasses                    |
| ½ cup each currants and raisins, soaked overnight in ½ cup brandy | ½ cup brandy                      |
|                                                                   | Brandy hard sauce or Foamy sauce  |

Sift dry ingredients and add fruits, nuts and apple. Stir in next three ingredients. Pour into one buttered 2½ quart mold or two 1½ quart molds. Cover tightly with lid or double thickness of waxed paper or foil. Secure paper or foil with rubber bands or string. Put on rack in large kettle and add boiling water to come halfway up sides of mold. Cover kettle and steam 3 hours. Unmold on serving plate, decorate with holly sprig and pour heated flaming brandy over top. Serve with either sauce. Makes 8 servings.

To make the Brandy Hard Sauce: Cream 1 cup sweet butter and 2 cups confectioners' sugar; beat in 1 teaspoon vanilla and ¼ cup brandy.



### A Pretty Legend

There is a pretty legend which relates that the history of the Christmas tree dates back to the ninth century, when a certain Saint Winfred went to preach Christianity to the people in Scandinavia and Northern Germany. One Christmas Eve these people were gathered round a huge oak to offer a human sacrifice, according to the Druid rites; but Saint Winfred hewed down the great tree, and, as it fell, there appeared in its place a tall young fir. When Saint Winfred saw it, he said to the people:

"Here is a new tree, unstained by blood. See how it points to the sky! Call it the tree of the Christ Child. Take it up now, and carry it to the castle of your chief. Henceforth you shall not go into the shadows of the forest to hold your feasts with secret and wicked rites. You shall hold them within the walls of your own home, with ceremonies that speak the message of peace and good will to all. A day is coming when there shall not be a home in the north wherein, on the birthday of Christ, the whole family will not gather around the fir-tree in memory of this day and to the glory of God." Since the passing of these days,

the custom of the Christmas tree has found its way into the remotest corners of the earth. Its significance and purpose have been crystallized in Christian minds and hearts, and yet there remains here and there the observance of certain quaint customs at Christmastide.

### CHRISTMAS BALLET

Long before the Russian composer Tchaikovsky wrote the music for the Nutcracker Ballet, generations of boys and girls have been captivated by the legend of the wonderful nutcracker.

The story was first written down by the German writer Hoffman, who called it "The Nutcracker and the King of the Mice." The story found its way to other countries, where it was given various plot twists.

In the Russian version, the tale begins with a gala Christmas Eve party. Uncle Dross, the children's favorite, arrives and presents Clara, the heroine of the story, with an amazing nutcracker in the form of a soldier, and her brother Frank with toy soldiers and a fort.

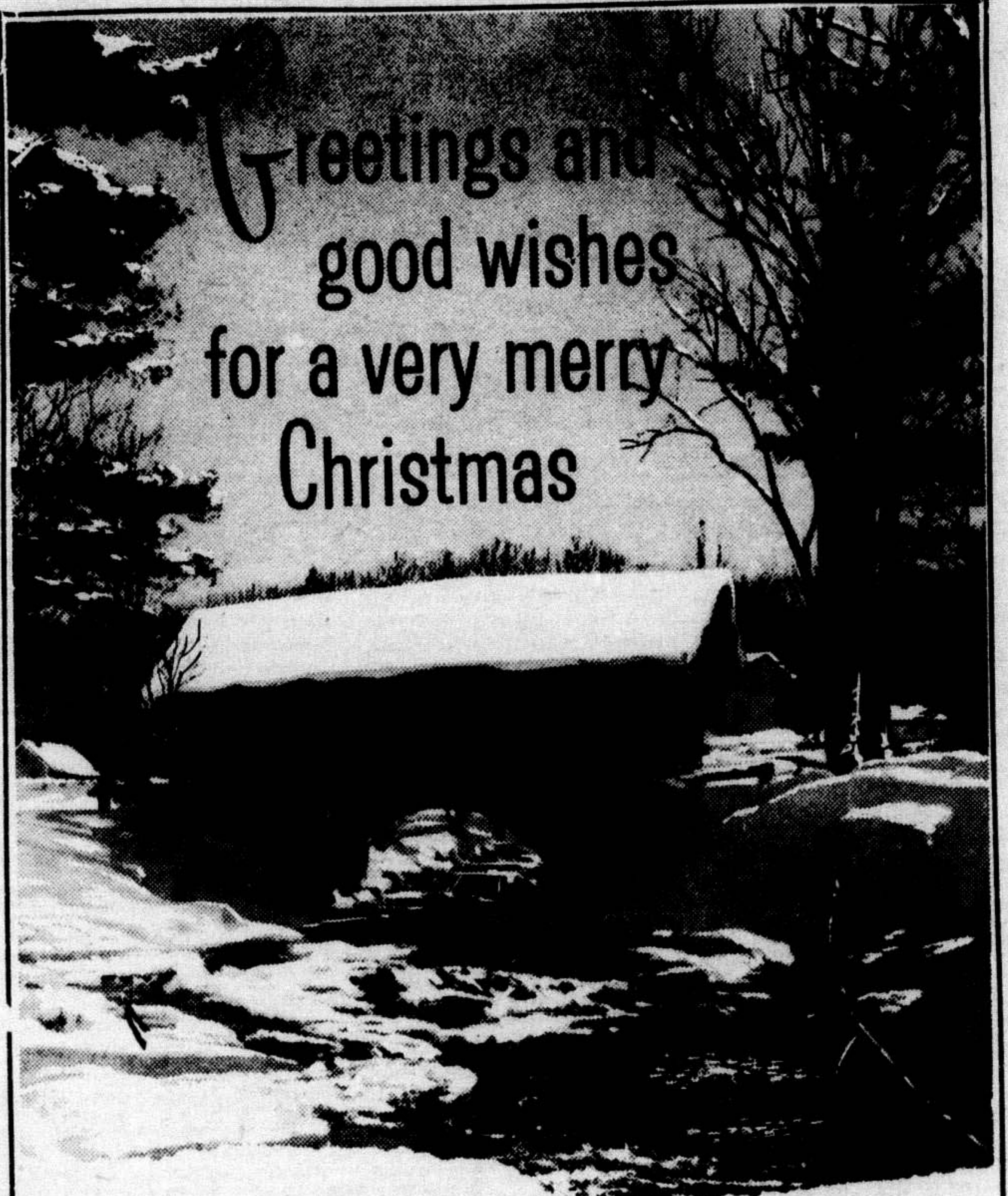
### CLOTHING GIFT

Once, it was customary for people to give their country's rulers clothing for Christmas, and Queen Elizabeth I acquired a large part of her wardrobe this way, historians say.



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