

# Some Christmas Babies and Men Born on the Great Day



FRANK WALTERS



MARVIN BISHOP AGE 3



MARIE WANBERG - AGE 3



FRED KNEPPER - AGE 2



EDWARD ROSEWATER AGE 2

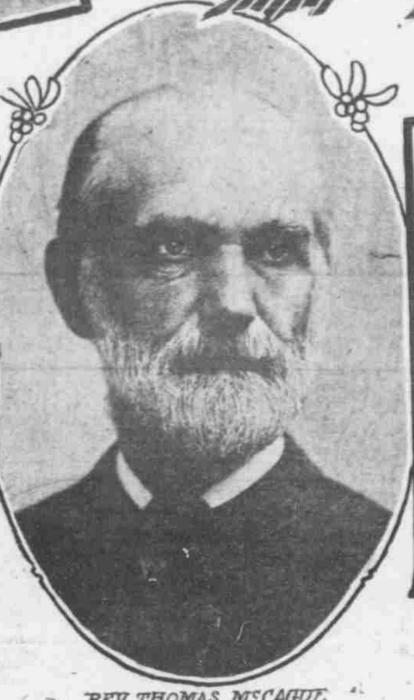
**S**OMEBODY must have a new baby—somebody always has a new baby," is one of the sage remarks of the "little mother" character in a popular play. True, indeed, but the parents who can boast having received babies as Christmas presents are very few in number. As a matter of fact, of the several thousand babies born in Omaha during the three years preceding 1910 but fifteen now living were ushered in under the auspices of Santa Claus. Yet that babies would be most welcome and highly delightful Christmas presents no one will deny, while the parents of the Omaha Santa Claus boys and girls are all willing to affirm that their babies born on December 25 were the gifts prized above all others.

In some countries the children born on Christmas are credited with bringing their own good luck with them, and to be able to fondle the Christmas baby is considered as a great favor by the simple folk of the old lands. Already plans for the feasting are increased, where possible, when the household is blessed with a new arrival on the anniversary of the birth of the Christ child.

Omaha can boast a goodly number of old and young who celebrate their birth anniversaries on Christmas day. The oldest is Rev. Thomas McCague, D. D., who this year is celebrating his eighty-fifth birthday. During his long span of years, most of which have been spent laboring in the vineyard of the Lord, he has witnessed the most remarkable developments, and some of the most wonderful changes, recorded in the history of the world. His work has been done not only in the United States, but also in foreign lands.



VERNA BAKER AGE 3



REV. THOMAS McCAGUE



ANTON TRISKA AGE 2



LEE HORTON AGE 2



IRVEN W. BARR



DR. E. A. VAN FLEET

### First American Missionary in Egypt.

When former President Roosevelt was in Omaha which he said was doing a grand work. His astonishment was almost as great as his delight when Brower McCague was introduced after the speech making and told the colonel that his father was the missionary who had established that mission almost half a century ago. John L. McCague of this city was born in Egypt while his parents were domiciled in the mysterious land of the Pharaohs.

Telephones, electric lights, airships and a good many other things considered very ordinary conveniences today were undreamt of when Mr. McCague was a laughing urchin making merry with others about the modest Christmas tree that youngsters could have in Ohio in 1825.

The first passenger railroad in the United States was not put in operation until three years after Mr. McCague was born. He was 7 years old when the nullification ordinance was passed in South Carolina and was 10 years old when Morse invented the telegraph. He was a boy of 12 when Queen Victoria succeeded to the British throne in 1837, yet she reigned a record number of years and has been long dead. Mr. McCague came to the legal age the year Elias Howe completed his sewing machine.

The Seminole war, the Mexican war, the French revolution, the Crimean war, the Indian mutiny, John Brown's raid, the American civil war, the Franco-Prussian war, and of course all the more recent conflicts, have occurred during the lifetime of this preacher of God's word. He has felt the shock of horror caused by the assassination of three American presidents and a dozen European rulers. He has seen new nations established, several of them republics like his own country.

### Has Witnessed Wonders.

Mr. McCague was a man of over 50 when Prof. Bell perfected the telephone, and was 22 when the first telegraphic message was flashed under the Atlantic ocean, and has lived to see the dreams of early discoverers realized by an American planting the Stars and Stripes at the North pole. He has the infinitely greater satisfaction of living to witness the conversion of hosts from heathenism to Christianity. The evangelization of the dark places of the world has been very measurably forwarded during his lifetime and in this great movement he bore a pioneer part, most worthily and with a flattering measure of success.

John Quincy Adams was president of the United States when Mr. McCague was born, and during his lifetime fifteen other presidents have ruled at Washington. But twenty-four states composed the American union when he was a baby, and since then twenty-two others have been admitted. The flag his youthful eyes beheld as the symbol of his country's life has been amplified and justified, and the nation's achievements and power spread through the history of the earth, while he has been pursuing the calm way of life, yet fighting the spiritual battle lustily.

And to the enjoyment of all these great developments witnessed by Mr. McCague the babies of the latter years have succeeded. Should any of them live

to his present age it seems assured they, too, will have beheld wonderful things come to pass.

### Made Much of Life.

Thomas McCague, D. D., was born in Ripley, O., in 1825, and was married in July, 1854, to Henrietta M. Lowes. The same year he went as the first American missionary to Egypt, his young wife accompanying him. They were sent by the United Presbyterian church and remained seven years in Egypt. Two of their twelve children were born in Egypt, John L. McCague of Omaha and Mrs. Alfred M. Gordon of Bellingham, Wash. In 1861 the McCague family came back to America and settled in Iowa, removing to Nebraska City in 1866. In July of the following year the missionary was transferred to Omaha by his church board, and he organized the first church of his denomination in this place. Services were held at first in Beals school house, situated at the corner of Fifteenth and Capitol avenues. At the end of the year the church board decided to suspend work in Omaha, but this did not suit the ambitious spirit of the young preacher. He proceeded to erect a small church on the corner of the lot where his own home stood, on South Tenth street. For four years he kept this church going without any sort of aid from the board, his own high character as pastor and citizen attracting

to him many friends. He has lived to see his denomination well and prosperously established in Omaha, and much inward satisfaction is his because of that accomplishment.

Besides the two children mentioned above Mr. McCague has living the following sons and daughters: Thomas H. and Brewer E. McCague, Omaha; William L. McCague, Chicago; Mrs. J. H. McCulloch, San Diego, Cal.; Mrs. George Marples and Lydia S. McCague, Omaha.

### Christmas Belong to Frank Walters.

Frank Walters, general manager of the Northwestern lines west of the Missouri river, was born on December 25, 1865, at Cedar Falls, Ia. He was educated in the public schools of the little Iowa town and filled various positions in the railroad service from 1882 to 1902. Steady application, faithfulness and a capacity to learn the business brought him into the position of division superintendent of the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific road in June, 1902. He remained six months in this berth and then was made assistant superintendent of the Chicago & Northwestern, remaining in that position until 1903, when he was made superintendent of the Sioux City division, holding this place until 1905. In that year Mr. Wal-

ters became assistant general superintendent at Norfolk, Neb., and was there something over a year. He took the position of assistant general manager in that year, and for a Christmas present he was appointed general manager in 1906, the date of appointment being December 10.

Frank Walters is not only known pretty generally as a mighty good railroad man, but in the social line he is also of the best type of American citizen. He belongs to the Omaha club, Country club, Commercial and Railroad clubs in Omaha, and is likewise a member of the Union League club, Chicago. Mr. Walters is married and two children, a boy and a girl, have

blessed his home, which has been in Omaha for the last four years.

### Dr. Van Fleet One of Elect.

Edward A. Van Fleet, an Omaha physician, came as a happy Christmas gift to his parents in 1868 at Randolph, Wis. The family afterward moved to Nebraska and he secured his education at Schuyler, graduating from the high school in 1888. During 1892-94 he attended Colner university and put in the next two years in the Lincoln normal university, from which he received a diploma. He afterward took the course at the Omaha Medical college, graduating with the class of 1902. Since taking up practice Dr. Van Fleet has kept his office in the McCague building. He is a trustee of the Child Saving institute, a member of the Nebraska and Douglas County Medical societies and also president of the Historical Entertainment association and of the Interstate Lyceum bureau. He affiliates with Kountze Memorial church.

### Christmas Baby at Stamp Window.

While he is dealing out the Christmas stamps at the Omaha postoffice Irven W. Barr does not forget that he is, or was, a Christmas baby, being born on December 25, 1873, at Ashland, Neb. Except for his birthday always falling on Christmas Mr. Barr says his life has been uneventful. He rustled for fun like other lads until 12 years old, since which time he has been busily at work all the year round. He secured what education he has in the public schools. The ninth grade in a high school having twelve grades at Friend, Neb., was as high as he went, but he discharges his duty as a servant of Uncle Sam with satisfaction. He is married, Mrs. Barr having been Miss Elizabeth Zimmer of Omaha before marriage. They have two children, neither born on Christmas day.

Edward Rosewater II, son of Victor Rosewater, editor of The Bee, was born two years ago today. That same Christmas day was the date of birth of seven other Omaha babies, one of whom appears in the group. The year before five babies arrived on Christmas day, while in 1909 but two Christmas births were reported. The ages given below the pictures are of this date, some of the photographs being taken much earlier.

Of the fifteen babies born in Omaha in the last three years nine were girls and six were boys. As will be noted from the pictures, the Christmas children, old and young, bear a striking resemblance to the great bulk of people not born on so happy a day. They are bright, promising looking people, and since Christmas has a doubly joyous meaning for them they ought to be particularly optimistic citizens.

## Pepys' Notes on Ancient Christmas Days

**I**N 1660 PEPPYS, the original social reporter, set down in his diary that he had listened to a dull Christmas sermon by a stranger in his church. He notes, too, "Our pew was all covered with rosemary and balm;" then wrote down the further fact that, when he got home, "found my wife and mayde with much ado had made shift to spit a great turkey sent me this week from Charles Carter, my old colleague." From which it will be seen the turkey was considered, even in the land of the "baron of beef," a goodly gift.

Two years later Pepys made this naive confession of dilatoriness and plentiful feasting, his wife evidently being ill:

"December 25, 1662 (Christmas Day).—With my boy walked, it being a most brave cold and dry frosty morning, and had a pleasant walk to White Hall, where I intended to have received the communion with the family, but I came a little too late. \* \* \* By and by down to the chapel again, where Bishop Morley preached upon the song of the angels, 'Glory to God on high, on earth peace, and good will towards men.' The sermon done, a good anthem followed, but I staid not. \* \* \* I walked home again with great pleasure, and there dined by my wife's bedside with great content, having a mess of brave plum porridge and a roasted pullet for dinner, and I sent for a mince pie abroad, my wife not being well to make any herself yet."

The next day Mrs. Pepys was up and busy, still "keeping Christmas," for the careful old reporter wrote in his diary:

"December 26, 1662.—Up, my wife to the making of Christmas pies all day, being now pretty well again, and I abroad to several places about business. \* \* \* Home, and found my wife busy among her pies, but angry for some saucy words that her mayde Jane has given her, which I will not allow of, and therefore will boy for his staying playing abroad when sent of errands."

Pepys also made interesting note, a day or two later, that he unwittingly beat his wife. He says, under date January 1:

"January 1, 1663.—Waking this morning out of my sleep on a sudden, I did with my elbow hit my wife a great blow over her face and nose, which waked her with pain, at which I was sorry, and to sleep again."

Not many modern men would make so refreshing confession, albeit old Pepys' sorrow did not prevent him "pounding the pillow" again right away.

On another Christmas day, 1666, Pe Pepys admits he slept late. Noting it was Christmas day, he set down:

"Lay pretty long in bed, and then rose, leaving my wife desirous to sleep, having sat up till 4 in the morning seeing her mayde make mince pies. I to church, where our Parson Mills made a good sermon. Then home, and dined well on some good ribs of beef roasted and mince pie; only my wife, brother and Barker, and plenty of good wine of my own, and my heart full of true joy, and thanks to God Almighty for the goodness of my condition at this day. After dinner I began to teach my wife and Barker my song,

'It is Decreed,' which pleases me mightily, as now I have Mr. Hunton's base. Walked alone on foot to the Temple, thinking to have seen a play all alone; but there, missing of any bills, concluded there was none, and so back home; and there with my brother reducing the names of all my books to an alphabet, and then to supper and to bed."

Whether "Barker" was son, maid or friend is not stated, but the heavy work of cataloging his books did not kill his merry spirit, for the next day Pepys wrote this in his diary:

"December 26, 1666.—To White Hall \* \* \* thence home, carrying a barrel of oysters with me. Anon comes Mr. John Andrews and his wife to dine with me and young Bateler and his wife. After dinner I put the women into a coach and they to the Duke's house to a play. It was indifferently done, Gosnell not singing, but a few wench, that sings naughtily. Thence home, and there Mr. Andrews to the vryll, who plays most excellent on it. Thence to dance, here being Pemberton come, by my wife's direction, and a fiddler; and mighty merry we were, and danced; and so till 12 at night, and to supper, and then to cross purposes, mighty merry, and then to bed."

On December 24, in 1667, Pepys stayed up nearly all night, at church services. His note of the occasion reads:

"December 24, 1667.—By coach to St. James', it being about 6 at night; my design being to see the ceremony, this night being the eve of Christmas, at the queen's chapel. I got in almost up to the rail, and with a great deal of patience staid from 8 at night to 2 in the morning, in a very great crowd."