

Because they found me out shores a land free from persecution, and that would reward their hard work with ample food supply, our Pilgrim fathers should thank to Almighty God. Likewise, we today have much to be thankful for!

# The Birmingham Eccentric

Wednesday, November 26, 1952

PART 3

## Bnam Youngsters Write Letters to Santa Claus

### And Santa Claus Also Writes

#### A Note to Them

1952 Christmas Tree Lane  
Santa Clausland, North Pole

Dear Boys and Girls of Birmingham:

I've just had an argument with Mrs. Claus and as usual she was right. It's only about six weeks until Christmas!

I've been so busy with toys and boxes and wrapping paper and ribbons that I'd forgotten all about making plans for your letters.

Well sir, just as soon as Mrs. Claus convinced me of how close Christmas is, I telephoned to The Eccentric and they told me they would be happy to print your letters for me again. In fact, they told me they had already asked some of the children in school to write some letters.

NOW OF COURSE some of you aren't in school yet and some of you aren't going to the schools that were asked. You send your letters along just the same.

As a matter of fact, there are three right here from little boys and girls who are not going to one of those schools. See here, here's one from a little boy named Dickie.

Dickie says he wants an "Indian suit, moccasins, a tommy hawk, feathers, hatchet, drum and TV set."

I can see where Dickie wants the rest of the family to have some fun those cold winter evenings, asking for that TV set. I don't blame him. Mrs. Claus, myself and all our workers surely do enjoy our set.

keeping the tank spotlessly clean just before spawning time.

"Everything in the tank has to be scrubbed," Mrs. Babcock said. "The tank, the leaves of the plants in the water, and even the gravel. Otherwise the fish won't lay the eggs."

The baby Angel fish—about 400 of them at the present time—are in one 75-gallon tank while the three pair of breeders are in three smaller separate tanks.

Black Molies are another species of tropical fish raised by the Babcocks. More than a hundred baby Black Molies are swimming in a 35-gallon tank while the breeders are in another 75-gallon tank.

AS THE NAME implies, this fish is black—a soft velvety black, although as Mrs. Babcock pointed out, some of the babies are almost white but turn black as they get older.

A few Black Molies look good in an aquarium of tropical fish," Mr. Babcock said, "because their blackness provides a contrast to the colors of the other fish."

In one tank by themselves is a pair of Dwarf Gouramis—a species blue and red tropical fish. "The male in this species does all the work," Mrs. Babcock remarked. "He builds a nest of seaweed and bubbles and carries the eggs to the nest where he watches over them until the eggs are hatched. I have to take the female out after the eggs are laid because the male doesn't want her anywhere near the nest."

PAPA GOURAMI watches over the eggs so conscientiously that he doesn't even take time out to eat the Babcocks said. In four or five days, the eggs are hatched and the little gouramis can swim around by themselves, although they aren't any larger than a pin head.

The beautiful tropical fish is the Beta or the Siamese Fighting fish. The Babcocks have raised them, too, although the Betas do not have an agreeable disposition and require particular attention.

"We can't put two Betas in one tank," Mr. Babcock said, "or else they'd kill one another. In Sign, the people bet on these fighting fish, just like cock fighting."

ALL TOLD, the Babcocks have raised about 20 different kinds of

THE OTHER two letters are from Candy Kanes and a little boy named Brian Kanes. I'll bet you they are brother and sister!

Candy wants a batonette for her doll, a baby carriage, a cook's set and ice skates, and by jove if she didn't draw my picture for me! Thank you, Candy. I'll give that picture to Mrs. Claus for her Christmas present.

Brian says he wants a "mineral city, plastic building bricks, log trailer, tractor, chemistry laboratory set, microscope outfit, steam engine, tractor, Iphemer's belt, field glasses, earth mover, Ray Rogers rodeo hat and a Roy Rogers set."

Opting food for literally hundreds of fish, even small ones like tropical fish can be a problem, but that has been solved by the Babcocks. They grow their own.

In glass refrigerator jars are billions of micro-nature growing in a culture of oatmeal, pabulum and yeast. Mrs. Babcock prepares 25 boxes of them at one time and then stores them until needed in a basement refrigerator reserved just for that purpose. They also buy the dried eggs of shrimp and hatch them in salt water for the fish to eat.

IN KEEPING the tanks clean, the Babcocks have the usual help of snails and baby catfish, which they also raise. They have about seven different types of baby catfish—some with whiskers, some looking like little snakes, others like lizards.

Babcock, who is a manufacturer's agent in Pontiac, and Mrs. Babcock consider their raising of tropical fish purely as a hobby, even though they do sell their surplus fish.

"We never will make any money at this," they both said. "The trouble is that we keep buying new varieties. While you can get supplies for \$20, some of the rarer kinds are the ones we want to get and they each can cost \$70 or more!"

YOU SEE how easy it is? Daddy or mother, or even your big brothers and sisters and your teachers at school will help you write your letters.

All you have to do is get them to The Eccentric right away because there are so many of you, and the men and women there will see that I get them all. Will you do this?

Every year some of you ask me to be sure and take things to the little folks who haven't any toys and to the ones who aren't feeling very well this year. I'll do the best I can, and God bless you for thinking of them all.

Some of you ask me to make the war in Korea stop so your daddies and your big brothers can come home again. Well, all by myself I can't stop that war, children, but maybe if you and I, and all our friends and families will pray for it to stop that will help. I'm quite sure, in fact, that our doing that will help a great deal.

LET'S PROMISE each other, right now, that we will pray for it to stop. We'll all pray, too, for help to come to those who have no homes and who are ill, all over the world.

Christmas is a wonderful time of fear, and maybe if we all get right at this we can start this world on the way to being a much happier place. Shall we try?

I'll write more to you next week, and for now, God bless you all.

Your Old Friend,  
SANTA CLAUS.

### Baldwin School Third Grade

Dear Santa Claus—I am in the third grade and I am a girl. My father name is Mr. Stewart and my mother name is Miss Fredericks. I want a new bicycle and a new chemistry set.

Dear Santa Claus—I am in the third grade and I am a boy. I want a new bicycle and a new chemistry set.

Dear Santa Claus—I am in the third grade and I am a girl. I want a new bicycle and a new chemistry set.

Dear Santa Claus—I am in the third grade and I am a boy. I want a new bicycle and a new chemistry set.

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Dear Santa Claus—I am in the third grade and I am a boy. I want a new bicycle and a new chemistry set.

brother wants a dump truck, my sister wants a toy telephone. I hope everybody has a merry Christmas. SHARON REED, RITT, P.S. My mother and father would like a place.

Dear Santa Claus, I have been thinking about you and Mrs. Santa Claus. I wonder if the little elves were busy with Christmas things for little boys and girls. Thank you for all the things you brought me last Christmas. Please help the Korea children. My sister would like a doll. My baby brother would like a rattle or a jack. My little brother would like a set of cars. And I would like a doll, a set of doll clothes and a play pen. I hope you and Mrs. Santa Claus have a very happy Christmas. RUSSELL MCCLANATHAN

Dear Santa Claus—I have been thinking about you I want a new and arrow. (Continued on Next Page)

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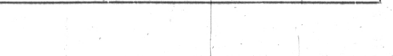
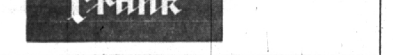
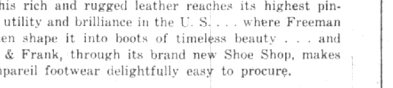
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MR. AND MRS. DAVID C. BABCOCK, JR.  
Admiring Their Tropical Fish Collection

## Tropical Fish Fill Basement Recreation Room

By RUTH ANNE SILBAR  
Special Writer For The Eccentric

Tropical fish, swimming about in an aquarium, can be interesting, colorful and add a decorative touch to any room. However, the raising of tropical fish is all of that and a great deal more. Mr. and Mrs. David C. Babcock, Jr., of Washington avenue, have discovered.

The Babcocks have been breeding and raising tropical fish for the past six years in aquariums down in their basement recreation room.

Mr. Babcock is responsible for getting her husband interested in this hobby. She brought home the first fish—guppies they were—in a little bowl. Now guppies, as most every one knows, are live bearing and Mrs. Babcock had fun raising the babies. Her husband wasn't interested.

As Mrs. Babcock became more interested in the hobby and experimented with the raising of tropical fish other than guppies, Mr. Babcock began to be a little interested.

BY THE TIME Mrs. Babcock had really gained the experience of raising these unusual fish and fish tanks began to supplant the small bowls and aquariums that were in use. Mr. Babcock was already a tropical fish fan.

Now it is a cooperative venture which both of them enjoy and work at together.

Raising tropical fish is not easy. You just don't put two fish in a fish bowl and bingo—something happens. Knowing what to do to get the fish to follow the natural

course of events comes after long study and experimentation and "just luck," the Babcocks agree. They have been particularly successful in raising Angel fish—those small, thin, disk-shaped fish with long tails and fins and their distinctive striping of black and white.

"THEY ARE NOT at all what you might call 'rare' as most aquarists of tropical fish contain some Angel fish," Mr. Babcock said, "but it is a rare occurrence to find a person who has acquired the 'knack' of raising them. Mrs. Babcock did."

When the Babcocks became too "successful" in raising these fish and had more Angel fish than they knew what to do with, they contacted a Detroit tropical fish dealer who was only too glad to relieve the Babcocks of their surplus and said that he would take all they would sell. Now all surplus fish that the Babcocks raise, Angel fish or otherwise, are sold wholesale.

THE SECRET of raising Angel fish, believes Mrs. Babcock, is in

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