



THE PIONEER

RURAL & RESIDENTIAL
PROPERTY

'Christmas 1930'

DENISE HAYNES - 'R & R' RURAL AND RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY



In 1930 the world was in the grip of the Great Depression. Our father had been out of work for two years. With a family of five girls and one boy to provide for he took any job that came his way. Mum sewed our clothing and cooked

everything we ate. Apart from the usual cakes, meals etc., she made all our sauces, jams, and pickles. She kept hens which provided us with eggs and our cow 'Buttercup' gave us milk and cream for butter. Dad's garden kept us well supplied with vegetables. The lack of money must have been hard for our parents but we children didn't feel deprived in any way. One thing was certain...on Christmas Eve Santa always called at our house.

Christmas 1930 I was 5 years old. I remember waking up Christmas morning when it was barely daylight. My eyes flew to the pillow-case fastened to the foot of my bed. Out its top peeped the loveliest doll I had ever seen. Mum and Dad in the next room smiled at one another as they heard my excited cry of "Ohhh, he's been". Clasp the doll I ran in to their bedroom.

"Santa's been, and look what he left me" I cried, as I climbed up on their bed to show them the doll. "Isn't she lovely?" I asked, not knowing that Mum had spent many hours for many weeks sewing the doll's crinoline dress and picture hat while I was fast asleep.

"She certainly is beautiful. What will you call her?" asked Dad.

"Her name is Emma" I cried over my shoulder as I ran to wake the others and tell them Santa had been.

The Christmas that I received Emma was special to me, also was the Christmas that I gave her away. I was twelve years old when it was suggested to me that "as you are too old to play with dolls any more, it would be nice if you gave Emma to your little cousin Gloria. She has asked for a doll for Christmas but Auntie Esme can't afford one".

My heart sank at the very thought of giving Emma away. Then I remembered that Gloria was five, the same age I was when Santa brought Emma to me. It was true, I didn't play with her any more so they were right, perhaps it was time to share her with another little girl that would love her as much as I had.

On Christmas morning Gloria's face was a picture of happiness as she proudly showed us the doll she had received. Dressed in a different outfit Emma was unrecognisable. Her new owner had named her Grace. There was a special hug for me and a whispered "thank you" from Auntie Esme.

I hoped that Grace would give Gloria as much pleasure as Emma had given me.

After all Christmas is the time for giving.
Happy Christmas.

*~ This story was kindly written for us by
Mrs Beryl Bowden of Stroud*