

# Margaret Sullavan

**W**ITHIN two days after she finishes her present picture, "The Good Fairy," Margaret Sullavan intends to be married. The picture should be finished before you read this and, consequently, Margaret should be on her honeymoon.

When she told me of this impending matrimony, across a luncheon table at Universal studios, I searched her gray Irish eyes for a betraying twinkle. Because Margaret Sullavan is quite likely to say anything that comes into her mind—anything at all—just to test your credulity. She had just told me that she intended some day to have fifteen children—which she did not mean, of course. When she said that, her eyes had smiled.

But this time they were steady.

She meant it.

That's all she said—all she would say. To the natural questions of who her intended is, what he does, where he lives, or what he looks like, she presented a very effective silence. No one may ever know until the wedding bells.

And when she does marry, very possibly, Margaret Sullavan—Hollywood's unhappiest actress, movie star against her will, and the girl whom Hollywood has never understood—will be able to slip out of the screen picture, and one of the most amazing chapters in Hollywood's ever-astounding history will come to a close. And as I first said—all this may already be over and done with. Margaret Sullavan may be married—now! Who

Perhaps marriage may be the happy exchange she seeks for fame, fortune and Hollywood

*By Kirtley Baskette*

can accurately predict for Hollywood?

Marriage may aid Margaret in what it is very evident she is seeking. An escape from a screen career.

Incredible as it sounds, it's true. The twenty-three year old girl, blessed with striking talent, gifted by the dramatic

gods as few are gifted, who was the major motion picture sensation of last year, who, in the short space of two pictures, has been soundly entrenched in popular adoration along with Katharine Hepburn, Joan Crawford, Norma Shearer—yes—and Greta Garbo; the girl who stepped from seven straight stage "flops" to a world wide cinema sensation, who is making more money now than she ever made in her life, who can look forward to rapidly pyramiding fame and mounting wealth, who stands on the threshold of a future so rose-hued as to be beyond the wildest dreams of an ordinary mortal, wants none of it.

*None of it!*

Neither the fame, the money nor that kind of a future it offers—not at the price she is paying for it. Which is unhappiness, deathly unhappiness, mental depression and nervous torture.

This sounds strange. It sounds fantastic. It would be just that with anyone else but Margaret Sullavan. It would be so fantastic as to reek of a publicity act. And Margaret has been accused of that, many times, ever since she first revealed by her singular, individual reactions—which seemed mad caprices—that the business of making pictures tore her to pieces.



When you see Margaret Sullavan in "The Good Fairy," take a long, lingering look. For nobody knows at what moment this girl who hates Hollywood will walk out of movies, never to return

# Wants None Of It!

But it's no act—it's an actuality, which time has made more and more insistent, more and more evident. I rather imagine she herself wondered about it for a while, whether or not she was sincere in her dislike of making pictures. I know, however, that time has convinced her that being a motion picture star presents a hopeless ordeal—that somehow Fate ironically picked the wrong person to thrust into a spotlighted spot in which somehow she cannot bear to remain.

I remember talking to her when she first came out from "Dinner At Eight" on Broadway to make "Only Yesterday." She was firmly convinced then that she was completely unequipped for the screen. John M. Stahl, the director who from his seat in a theater audience had picked her for the part he had searched all over the world to fill, had to plead and coax her to come to Hollywood, to fame, fortune and future.

**S**HE didn't want to. She had never heard of John Stahl, she wasn't interested in any part of a Hollywood career. She finally weakened, not from the desire of becoming a screen star, not with the faintest idea of ever possibly becoming a screen star. She weakened because she had played a series of unsuccessful Broadway shows—and here was a successful, guaranteed engagement.

"I'm a mess for movies," she believed then, after a few days on the set of "Only Yesterday." "I'm not even half-way beautiful. I don't know anything about making pictures. As soon as this is through, I'm going back to New York." Which she did; in fact, she started to leave a time or two before the picture was finished.

Her interrupted flights, her sincere protests, her storied rebellions, her eccentric actions were not temperament. They were inspired by a sudden and overpowering realization that [ PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 108 ]



Margaret Sullavan sincerely believes that she is not beautiful and that she cannot act. However, one can't agree with her after a glance at the portrait on the left and seeing her fine portrayal of the orphan girl in her latest picture, "The Good Fairy"

# All the World's His Stooge

[ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 77 ]

eventually substituting rubber balls for the stones. Rapidly he became more adept, and finally was urged to present his "act" on amateur night at the neighborhood theater in the Bronx. Jimmy won first prize, and the manager offered the youngster a two-a-day contract.

As the years went on, Savo developed the most complicated of juggling routines. One intricate trick took him two years to perfect. Once, while presenting it in a vaudeville house, he missed and the audience laughed. Savo decided that he would never be laughed at again while trying to perform a difficult and serious act. So he went back to simple tricks, doing them with comedy pantomime. His comedy was so successful that gradually he dropped the juggling and emphasized the pantomime. Almost at once he became a headliner in vaudeville, featured comedian in Broadway shows, and a popular entertainer in New York's most famous night clubs.

It is surprising that until now movies paid little attention to him. For his *forte* is pantomime—always more effective on the screen than on the stage. He made some Sunshine comedy shorts for Fox back in the silent days, and they attracted no particular attention. Last Spring he made a movie, "The Girl in the Case," for Dr. Eugene Frenke, husband of Anna Sten. A private production, the picture was never released. However, picture men and critics who saw the movie by invitation, sang Savo's praises. And a few months later Hecht and MacArthur asked him to play the lead in their picture.

Maybe Hollywood shunned him because he once told a movie director that he would like to see his favorite book brought to the screen. It's

"The Dishonest Conductor," by Rob Nickels.

He makes everybody stooge for him. And they like it! He'll say to you merrily, "Come and go to the fair with me this afternoon."

You answer, "But, Jimmy, I didn't know there was a fair in town."

"Must be. I read it in the paper last night, 'Fair today and tomorrow.'"

He's the only comedian I've ever known who even makes stooges out of the writers who are interviewing him.

Ask him about his education and he'll say, "Sure I went to school. What did I take up? Space. No, seriously, I studied geography. I learned that the most important animal in Russia is a Mouse-cow."

ASK him about his film plans for the future—if he may go to Hollywood—and he answers, "Well, I bought an elephant so I'll have a trunk handy, just in case. And that reminds me, do you know whose baby is being fed on elephant's milk? The elephant's baby, of course."

You groan and try to bring him back to the subject of movies, his career, and ask him if he, like most comedians, wants some day to do dramatic rôles.

"No," he answers. "Once I wanted to write plays. But now I know I'd rather be Jimmy Savo than William Shakespeare. Because Shakespeare, you know, is dead."

You groan again and ask him what he would like to do if he should go to Hollywood, and he says, "I'd like to become a rhinoceros, so I can horn in everywhere. You know, I hear Hollywood is a tricky place. They even have a trap set for *Mickey Mouse*."

If Jimmy Savo does go to Hollywood it won't

be soon. That is, unless Ben Hecht and Charlie MacArthur, now producing pictures for Paramount in New York, change their minds and agree to return to the Coast. For Jimmy is under contract to Hecht and MacArthur for six pictures to follow "Once in a Blue Moon." They are convinced that the Broadway comedian is going to be a screen sensation, a second Chaplin. They believe that his ill-fitting, patched-up clothes and his always handy bean-shooter will become as famous as Charlie's big shoes and cane.

And if his two directors are silent when Jimmy tells a joke, it's probably because they're afraid to open their mouths for fear Savo will make stooges out of them.

And he does, too. For example, they were ready to start work on the set when Savo rushed up to Hecht, saying, "Hey, do you know who is in the hospital?"

Hecht cast an anxious eye about the set. "No, who?"

"Sick people," Jimmy answered.

"Well, you oughta be there!" Hecht snarled.

"Oh, no. Not me, Ben. I just swallowed a mint and I feel like a million dollars! By the way, Ben. You're a great director, and I'm an actor, trying to learn how to speak lines. A guy last night told me it was possible to say 'What am I doing?' in five different ways, making five shades of meaning, just by accenting different words. But I don't believe that, do you?"

"Certainly, it is," the director answered. "I'll show you. *What* am I doing? *What* am I doing? *What am* I doing? *What I am* doing? *What am I* doing?"

"Making a sap of yourself, Ben! Well, call me when the camera's ready."

## Margaret Sullavan Wants None of It!

[ CONTINUED FROM PAGE 29 ]

she was not and never would be happy making pictures. It wasn't just Hollywood. Margaret had preconceived ideas about Hollywood—playtime Hollywood—and stunningly ignored it. All during her debut picture she was "regular" enough about doing the extra-set tasks demanded of a star. The publicity gags, pictures, smiles, introductions. No one called her a "prima donna."

But she was terribly unhappy every minute of the time she spent within studio gates. And she still is. I happen to know that ever since "Only Yesterday," and its undreamed of result of lifting her to the small pinnacle of great screen stars, Margaret Sullavan has never been the same.

**EVEN** during the filming of "Little Man, What Now?" under the kindness and understanding of Frank Borzage, whom she liked, on a set where harmony and pleasantness ruled, Margaret suffered the same soul-twisting tortures.

Every picture has been a Hell for her to get through. Her attitude, which is genuine and uncontrollable, has not changed one iota

from the first discouraging week of her screen career to the day we talked at luncheon.

To completely understand it would be to completely understand Margaret Sullavan—and only the gods can dare boast such perception. For she is no ordinary person; on the contrary, she is one of the most intensely interesting and individual characters ever to visit Hollywood.

However, here is an attempt at least to penetrate the shell of a psychology which has provided Hollywood with an enigma rapidly becoming as classic as Garbo.

In the first place, all the rich rewards of movie stardom leave her as cold as a casting director's eye.

Money, movie money, big money simply has no lure for her. She doesn't want mink coats and town cars. Making good in a show world doesn't lend her the slightest desire to make a show.

Last year she drove a small, second-hand medium priced roadster; this year she doesn't even own a car, but rents a 1932 rattly, two-seater of one of the lowest priced makes.

Living in style, wearing sensational, expen-

sive clothes, putting it on in the grand manner is actually distasteful to her. Last year, again, she took a house in Coldwater Canyon, not a big house, but a nice house. This year she lives right in the heart of Hollywood, in a small apartment. The address is good, but not ultra-ultra. Fame, publicity, glamour, ballyhoo, they make her shudder. I doubt if she has read one one-hundredth of the stories written about her. She keeps none of her countless still portraits. She wasn't enjoying having luncheon with me, although we are friends, because she knew I was going to write about her. Anything attempted in the nature of an interview is actually painful to her. Talking about herself makes her weak inside. She made me promise not to quote her.

**THE** fact that millions of people all over the world are being entertained and made happy by her pictures, the fact that she is succeeding in what most people consider an immeasurably great career does not begin to compensate her for what she sincerely feels she is missing because of it.

To her any career—even the stage, which,

she loves almost reverently—isn't worth a snap of the fingers if it in any way bounds her freedom. If it keeps her from drinking to the fullest of life.

In some ways, Margaret Sullavan is a wise old woman; in others, I suspect that she is a naive child.

Because she eagerly wants, she insists on every worth while fruit in the world's Eden—not sometime, but *now*.

She wants a stage career (she wants to "learn how to act"!!) she wants to travel, she wants marriage, a home, children, she wants leisure—and all pretty much at once. The fact that all of these can come in a few years, after she has made herself independent for life, by a short prison "stretch" in Hollywood, cuts no figure whatever with her.

She thinks that now is the time to be free—not later.

OF course, most of us wouldn't consider the making of two pictures a year (even though each picture, being the most important on Universal's schedule, takes from two to three months to film) exactly the four walls of a prison—but to one so geared as Margaret Sullavan, it is more than a prison—it's a torture chamber.

Every day she spends on the set saps her energy to the last dregs and tires her to nervous exhaustion. She goes home in a state of mind which carries the conviction that her day's work has been futile—that she has given a miserable performance—that she has wasted a precious, irretrievable day of her life—for naught.

She can't bear to view the rushes of her day's work in the evening after the final "Cut" has sounded.

Director William Wyler asked her as a special favor to see them on her present picture, "The Good Fairy."

He thought it would help her.

She went for two evenings. She couldn't stand to see herself and begged off; she hasn't seen them since.

From all of it she wants to escape. Weary of the bargain which unsought, unexpected success has forced on her, Margaret Sullavan wants a way out.

Will the marriage that she contemplates help her find the freedom and the rich experience of life she demands, and which, being made as she is made, Hollywood denies her? Will it be the first step towards her eventually forsaking the screen?

OR will it change her whole psychology, revamp her unusual attitude towards screen stardom, give her enough of the extra-studio life she now lacks, and make what now seems dull torture an attractive career?

There is only one answer—

She will still be essentially Margaret Sullavan, no matter whom she marries—and so sincere is her unhappy dislike of a screen star's life, that no mere wedding ring can transform its aura from gray to golden.

Of course, marriage or no marriage, she can't just quit. She's a very valuable piece of screen property, whether she likes it or not—and Universal has a contract with her for two more years.

But she is just enough of a life loving, freedom seeking person to go in for this marriage with her whole soul, found a home and raise a family!

So take a good look, a long lingering look at Margaret Sullavan in "The Good Fairy," for that picture and the one after it might be your last chance to see her for some time.



Vivacious little Toby Wing, Paramount feature player, and S. J. Perelman, famous humorist now writing for Paramount, both vote for the Hawaiian "Here's How" made with one-third of a glass of DOLE Pineapple Juice, a dash of cider and seltzer and ice.

### "Here's How!" says Wing to Perelman

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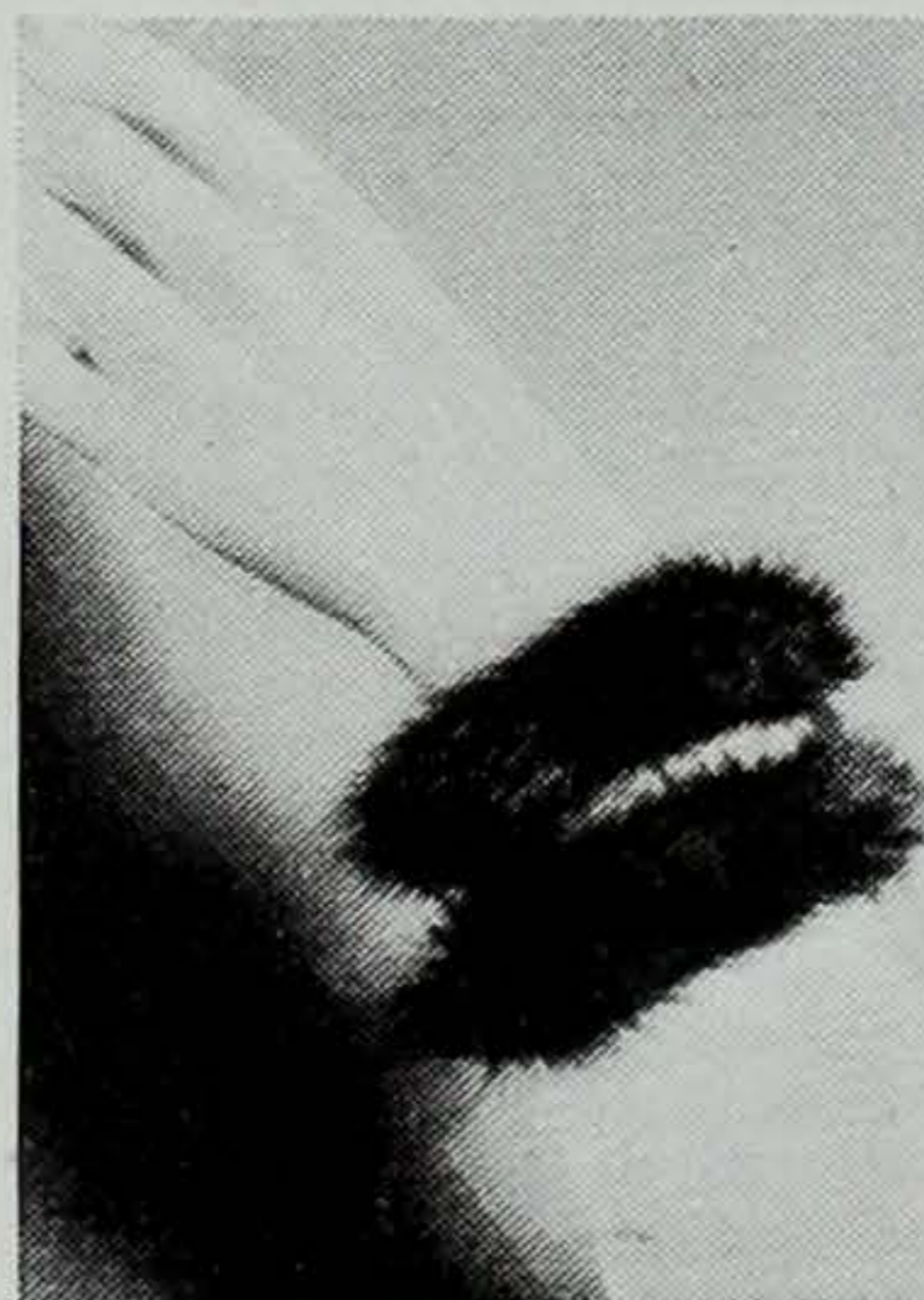


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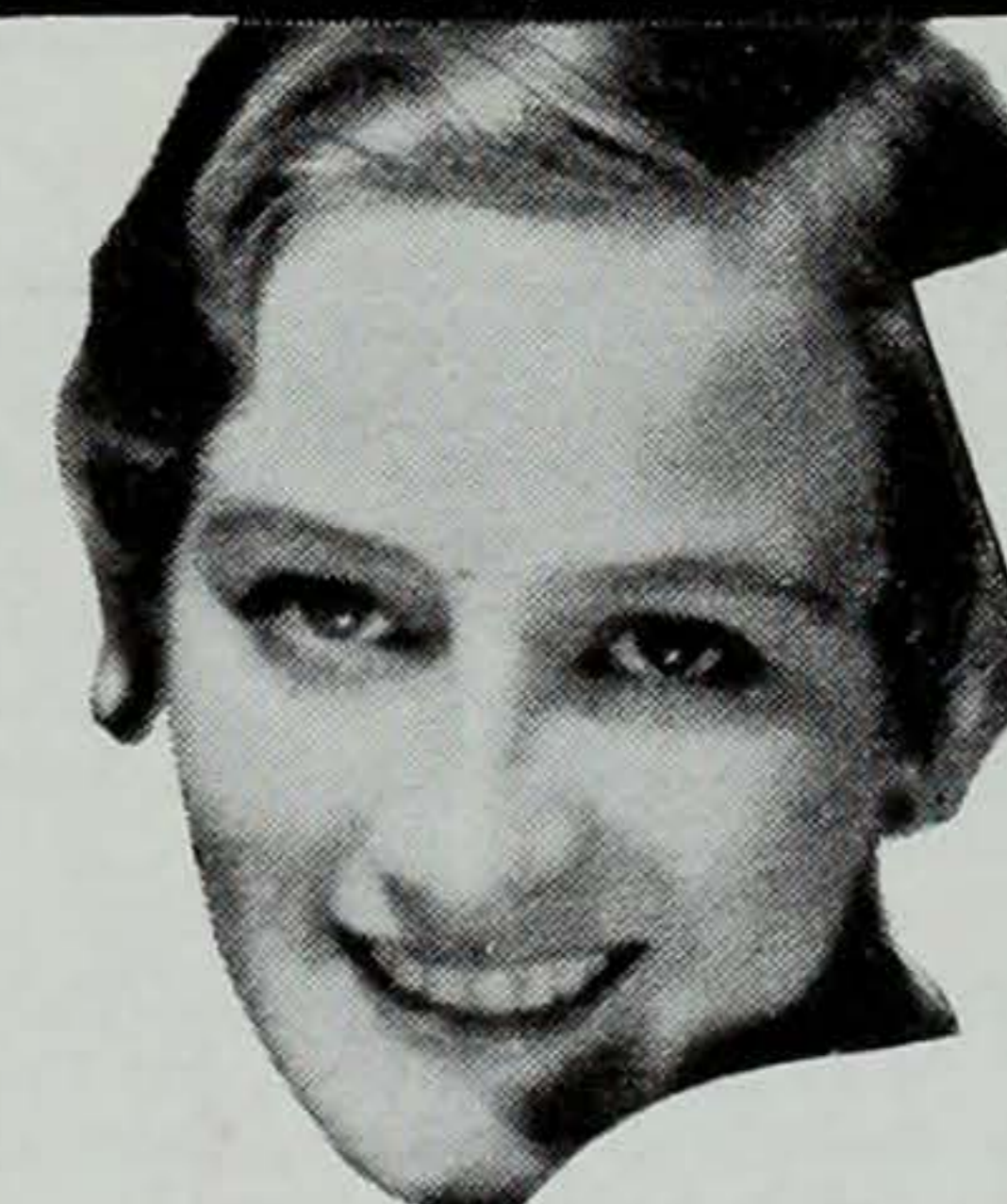


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# For Your Christmas Dinner



As capable a cook as she is an actress, Margaret Sullavan bastes her huge turkey with pure olive oil, thereby enriching the flavor of bird and gravy and giving the white meat a fine texture

**B**ASTING with olive oil works wonders on the turkey itself, but without a properly blended, taste-tempting filling no holiday meal can be quite complete.

*Chestnut Stuffing* is perhaps our wisest choice. Besides being a perfect accompaniment, it imparts a delicate tang to the meat while roasting. Here, as in every cooking venture, measuring accurately and carefully following directions will pay big dividends. Now for the method:

Loosen the shells and inner skin from 1 quart of large chestnuts by cutting a gash on the flat side of each nut, shaking them in a little melted butter, and setting them in the oven for 10 minutes. Remove shells, and boil in salted water until tender. Drain and press through a potato ricer. Add 1 pint of dry breadcrumbs or an equal amount of hot mashed sweet potato, 1 egg,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup butter, 1 teaspoon salt, some chopped parsley, and the turkey liver, chopped finely. A little onion and lemon juice and pepper may be added. Mix all ingredients well, and if you prefer dressing moist, add soup stock or cream.

*Fruit Salad* made with 3 oranges, 3 bananas,  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound Malaga or seedless grapes,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup chopped pineapple and the juice of 1 lemon helps balance a hearty dinner.

An excellent fruit salad dressing is made by combining and

Some new, some old suggestions, but all delicious additions to the festive meal

beating well the following— $\frac{1}{3}$  cup of salad oil,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoons of lemon juice, a pinch of salt, a few grains of paprika, and 1 tablespoon of melted currant jelly.

*Onions* will, of course, be served. But why not try glazing them as a change from the creamed ones.

Peel small boiling size onions. Melt 2 tablespoons of butter in a large iron skillet, and place onions in it, right side up, crowding them closely but having only one layer. Sprinkle 1 cupful sugar over them, and salt and pepper. Cover closely and cook over a slow burner until the onions are transparent.

*Old-fashioned Pumpkin Pie* should be on every Christmas menu. So, here we go on the ingredients:

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  cups of cooked pumpkin
- 1 cup of rich milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of sugar
- 1 teaspoon of cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon of allspice
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon of mace
- 2 eggs, well beaten
- 1 tablespoon of butter
- Pinch of salt

Place the pumpkin, milk, sugar, salt and spices in a double boiler. After the mixture is well blended and

heated through, add the beaten eggs and stir until it thickens. Then add butter and pour into a crisply baked crust while hot. Place in a moderate oven and bake the pie slowly until the filling is firmly set.

If you would like to depart from custom and vary your dessert from the usual pies and plum pudding, why not serve the typically English dessert—a *Trifle*?

This requires 1 pound each of lady fingers and macaroons,  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound each of shelled almonds and crystallized cherries, halved, 1 pint each of fruit juice and hot milk, 1 quart of whipped cream, 2 tablespoons of flour, 1 well beaten egg, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of sugar.

Soak macaroons in fruit juice, blanch and chop the almonds. Make a custard of the sugar, flour and well beaten egg. Add gradually to the hot milk in double boiler and cook until thick, stirring constantly. Cool, add the almonds and half of the whipped cream.

Line a large glass bowl with the lady fingers, add the cream-custard mixture and the macaroons, placing the cherries all through the bowl.

Cover with the rest of the whipped cream and decorate with cherries. Serves twelve.