



Angel at crib by JOANNA, 8, South Wales

christmas is special because it is Jesus's birthday and he is the son of God.

MARY, 6, Birmingham (see photo below)

# NEW WORLD NEWS

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CHRISTMAS IS THE TIME for joy and happiness. It is also a time for people to give and share with others. In our country we celebrate Christmas by killing a sheep and sharing it with our neighbours who also give us something of whatever they have. On Christmas Day many people used to come to wish us Merry Christmas and dine with us, or we go to do the same. Mummy used also to make the best beer she could and give some of it to our guests and the beggars. So in our country we celebrate Christmas together with our Grandpas, aunts, uncles and neighbours. But here in England we get presents from Father Christmas and we send cards and presents to our friends. Very few in our country celebrate Christmas with a Christmas tree. Christmas really means a time to enjoy yourself and help others at their need, for instance the poor people, the needy and the dying. They all need help from others. They need money and looking after. Above all, we should be content with what we get, then remember God and thank Him for His Son Jesus.

Merry Christmas everybody.  
AIDA 10, ESTHER 8 and ZEB 5,  
Eritrea, Ethiopia, now living in Britain

ONE of the things I liked best since last Christmas was when my sister Mary and I made a club. We made a club with some of our friends to raise money for the people in India that are in the floods. We had a sale and raised £43, and then a few weeks after that we had a concert and raised £26. In about a month at Christmas we are going to show a film (*Give A Dog A Bone*) and hope to raise some more money.

CAITRIN, 9, Birmingham



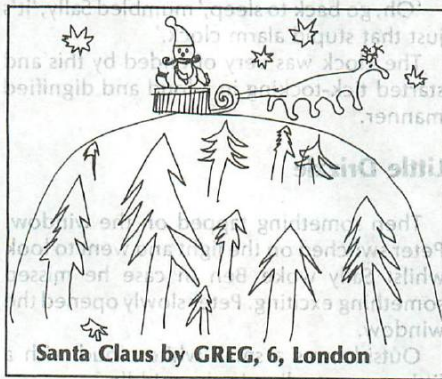
IN BRITAIN Christmas is a festival many people tend to forget the real meaning of, because of there being so many presents. Many people put models of the stable and the Baby Jesus and all the animals under the tree but they don't seem to think about Him as much as they ought to. The presents are the main thing for many people but are not really as important as Jesus's birth.

As well as celebrating the birth of Jesus, we use Christmas to thank God for the past year and to be in good spirits for the year ahead.

The difference Christmas makes to us is that it reminds us that Jesus was born in the most troubled part of the world. He grew up and lived in a place where a lot of trouble is rising today. Since He was born in Bethlehem He would probably have been born brown, neither black nor white, and so He would have been able to bring peace and understanding to both the East and the West.

The whole point about Jesus is that He showed us and helped us to live for caring and forgiveness rather than for hate and blame. Although it is not easy to carry this out at home, at least this is where we are trying to start.

PETER, 12, Oxford

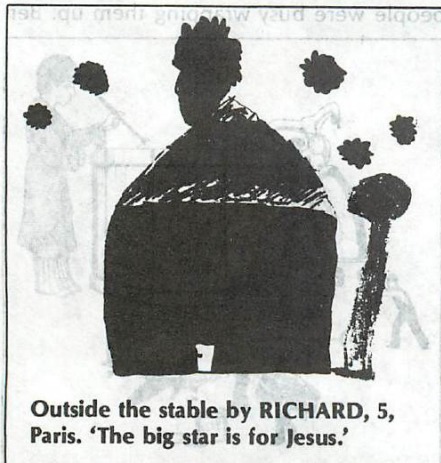


Santa Claus by GREG, 6, London

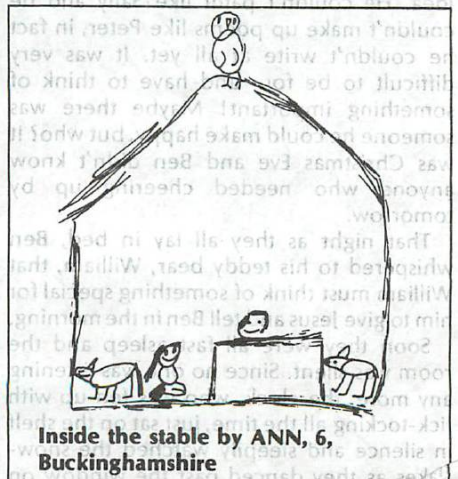
SANTA is very kind because he gives children presents and grown-ups give children and other grown-ups presents. It's the time we should be happy because it is Jesus's birthday and He teaches everyone to be kind. And we do plays that tell about what He did long ago.

CHRISTMAS is not only for getting presents but for remembering Jesus's birthday. He was God's Son and He came to change everybody. He's helped me when I am lonely and when I am cross.

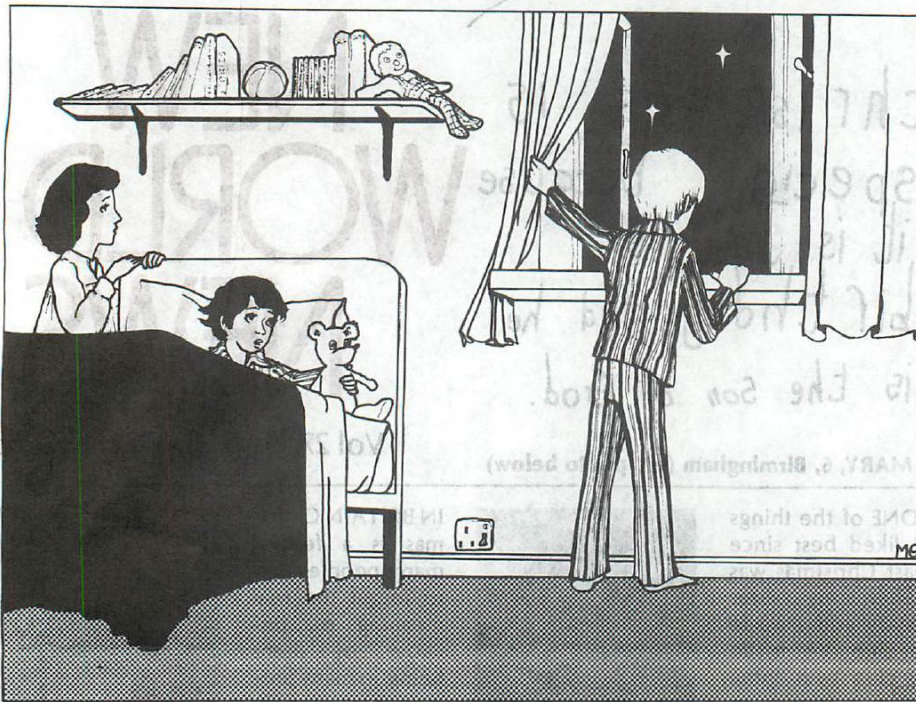
SANDY, 6, London  
CHRIS, 7, Cape Town



Outside the stable by RICHARD, 5, Paris. 'The big star is for Jesus.'



Inside the stable by ANN, 6, Buckinghamshire



# MISTER FLUSTER AND

written and illustrated

'Of course,' said the man desperately. 'How else can we reach the great Snow Cloud?' So after he'd introduced the children to the cloud, whose name was Little Drizzle, they all climbed on board with William tucked under Ben's arm.

Little Drizzle was very comfortable and they could see right across London as they sailed over the school, past the post office and just missed bumping into the multi-storey car park.

As they travelled, the man, whose name was Mr Fluster, explained why he needed Ben's help. He told them he lived on a big snow cloud and all the people that lived there were toymakers. They made toys for every boy and girl and tried to make exactly what each child wanted in time for Christmas Day. Lots of boys liked train sets and cars, and dolls were very popular with girls. They made exciting games for children indoors, and bicycles and skateboards for children who wanted to be outside. And then... well, they made every kind of toy you could think of, and more.

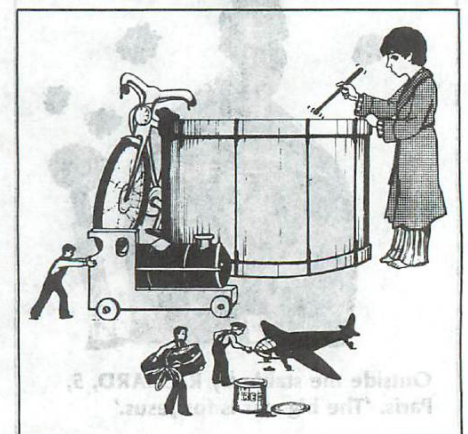
Mr Fluster worked in the Department for Difficult Cases where they tried to find suitable toys for children who were difficult to please. It wasn't always easy but Mr Rainbow, who was in charge, always managed to find a toy to make each child happy. But now they had a very Difficult Case, and even Mr Rainbow couldn't think of anything for the little girl.

'And then someone suggested that a child the same age as her might be able to help,' continued Mr Fluster, 'and that's why we need you, Ben... Oh good! We're almost there!'

In the distance high above them was a great white cloud. As they came nearer they could see tall white buildings and small toymakers rushing around with parcels.

Little Drizzle sat down just long enough for them to climb on to the Great Snow Cloud and then off she went to rain on Flitwick.

Mr Fluster took them through a large doorway marked 'Department for Difficult Cases' to a room filled with all the toys you've ever dreamed of. Hundreds of little people were busy wrapping them up. Ben



'IT'S BED TIME,' announced Mum to the three children who were sitting round the fire in their dressing gowns.

'But Daddy, tell us about Christmas,' pleaded Sally, and so Dad explained once more that tomorrow was Jesus's birthday. Mum never ceased to wonder at the sudden thirst for knowledge that the children acquired around bed time.

'And do we all get presents because it's His birthday?' asked Sally.

'Yes, that's right,' said Dad.

'But Dad,' said Ben, in a very puzzled voice, 'if it's Jesus's birthday shouldn't we give Him a present too?'

'Well, yes, Ben, I suppose we should,' Dad replied.

There was a thoughtful silence and then Peter announced he would write Jesus a special birthday poem as his gift. Sally decided to make a card with all her favourite colours on it. Dad couldn't think of anything but Mum suggested that one thing Jesus wanted was for people to be made happy. So she and Dad could make a gift by going to see old Mrs Thomas and taking her some Christmas cake.

But poor Ben was completely lost for an idea. He couldn't paint like Sally and he couldn't make up poems like Peter, in fact he couldn't write at all yet. It was very difficult to be four and have to think of something important! Maybe there was someone he could make happy, but who? It was Christmas Eve and Ben didn't know anyone who needed cheering up by tomorrow.

That night as they all lay in bed, Ben whispered to his teddy bear, William, that William must think of something special for him to give Jesus and tell Ben in the morning.

Soon they were all fast asleep and the room was silent. Since no one was listening any more, the clock, who was fed up with tick-tocking all the time, just sat on the shelf in silence and sleepily watched the snowflakes as they danced past the window on

their journey to the ground.

The clock was falling asleep too when he noticed something large and white approaching the window. He was so frightened that his alarm went off!

Peter woke up immediately and shook Sally in the next bed.

'Sally, Sally! There's something very strange...'

'Oh, go back to sleep,' mumbled Sally, 'it's just that stupid alarm clock.'

The clock was very offended by this and started tick-tocking in a loud and dignified manner.

## Little Drizzle

Then something tapped on the window. Peter switched on the light and went to look whilst Sally woke Ben in case he missed something exciting. Peter slowly opened the window.

Outside was a small white cloud with a little man standing in the middle.

'Oh, there you are,' said the small man. 'You must be Ben! I've been steering this cloud from house to house looking for you. Clouds are very difficult to steer, you know. They don't like being told where to go.'

'But mister, I'm Peter,' said Peter, 'Ben's over there.'

'Well, why didn't you say so?' said the man, hopping on to the window-ledge and staring round the room.

'Ah, Ben!' he said, as he spotted Ben sitting up in bed. 'We need your help very much and there's so little time. You must come at once!'

'You're not taking my brother anywhere alone,' interrupted Sally, who was feeling ignored, 'he's only four.'

'Well, you come too,' said the man, 'as long as we can go now. That cloud can't remain here much longer, you know, she's got to rain on Flitwick tomorrow.'

'You mean we can ride on your cloud?' said Ben, bouncing up and down.

# THE DIFFICULT CASE

by Margaret Gray

put William down beside a group of pink bears while he went to look at an enormous tin drum, the kind he'd always longed for. Mr Fluster told him that they were keeping the drum for a child who deserved a very special present, and then he took all three children to see Mr Rainbow.

Mr Rainbow was sitting in a corner looking rather worried but when he saw Ben he brightened up. He told him all about the little girl whose name was Mandy, and asked him if he would help.

He looked so worried that Ben gave him a big cheer-up-smile and promised to do his very best.

'Great!' roared Mr Rainbow. 'Now you must go by fast cloud to Newcastle, where she lives, and talk to her.'

So Ben picked William up and they all went outside where the fastest cloud was waiting to take them north. It was called Scattered Showers and was twice as wide as Little Drizzle and three times as long. They climbed on board and off they raced over towns and villages towards Newcastle, whilst the people below in their homes were fast asleep.

Soon they were above Newcastle and nobody spoke as Mr Fluster was concentrating on reading his map by starlight. Eventually he found the house and they gently glided to the upstairs window.

## Mandy

Ben climbed in through the open window. Peter and Sally followed and sat on the window-sill with Mr Fluster and William.

Ben looked round the room. It was very big and in one corner was a bed with a little girl asleep in it. Ben thought how much friendlier the room would be if it had three beds instead of one, and a brother and sister asleep in them, and a teddy bear like William to talk to when the brother and sister were away at school. He tiptoed up to the bed and very softly called Mandy's name. First of all she frowned and then she groaned and then, with a very big sigh, one eye opened and then the other. She stared at Ben.

'Hallo!' he said. 'I've been sent to find out what kind of present you would like for Christmas.'

'Have you really?' said Mandy looking rather miserable. 'I don't know what I want.'

'Well, what about a skateboard, or a big red ball or....' And he suggested everything he could think of. But Mandy still looked miserable, and Ben realised that this was indeed a Difficult Case.

'Well, what's wrong with a doll?' he asked.

'I don't like them 'cause they're hard and plastic. I want something soft and friendly.'

'Ah, something soft and friendly!' said Mr Fluster. 'Well, what can we think of that's soft and friendly?'

They all thought for ages but they couldn't think of anything that was soft and friendly.

'You're not very good at this, are you?'

said Mandy. Ben sat on the end of her bed and looked so disappointed that Mandy thought she ought to make an effort to be more helpful.

'Well,' she tried, 'why don't you close your eyes and think of the softest, friendliest thing you know and tell me what it is?'

Ben closed his eyes tight and thought very hard, but, apart from William, who was the softest, friendliest teddy bear in the whole world, he really couldn't think of anything at all. So he opened his eyes and told Mandy that, apart from William, he couldn't think of anything.

'What's a "William"?' asked Mandy.

'What's William!' repeated Ben, who thought that everyone knew William, 'Why, that's William.'

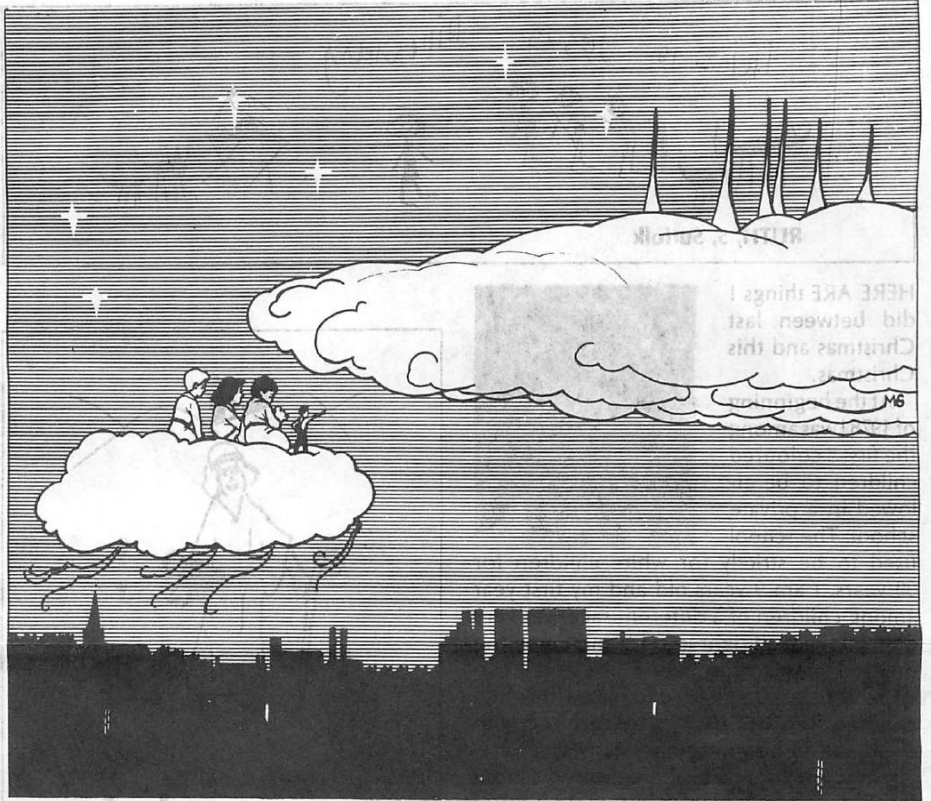
Mandy turned her face towards William and stared and stared. Then slowly her mouth widened into a smile and she wriggled out of bed and walked over to where William was sitting on the window-sill.

'So this is a William,' she said and smiled even more. 'Oh, yes! Can I have a William for Christmas please?' And she hugged William and closed her eyes, she was so happy.

'Oh, a teddy bear,' said Mr Fluster. 'Well, we've got pink ones and blue ones and bears that sing nursery rhymes!'

'No, no,' said Mandy, 'not one of those, a William like this; with a nice soft patch across his knee and a floppy ear, all soft and friendly.'

All eyes were fixed on Ben. There was only one William like that and that William belonged to Ben. Ben frowned. This wasn't fun



any more. He was quite prepared to give advice on presents, particularly if it meant getting a free ride on a cloud. But now they were expecting him to give up William. He frowned harder still. It was true that he had a big brother and sister to play with as well as William, and Mandy didn't have anyone at all. Then suddenly, Ben thought of something and his eyes grew wide and his frown disappeared and he smiled his cheer-up smile again.

He walked over to Mandy and told her that if she looked after William, she'd see that he was the softest, friendliest bear in the whole world.

Mandy was so happy that she danced about the room and didn't notice the others leaving. Scattered Showers pointed himself towards London and took a deep breath and zoomed through the night to get the children safely home and in bed.

When they got there they waved goodbye to Scattered Showers and Mr Fluster, and climbed into bed.

'Ben,' said Peter, 'I'm proud of you.'

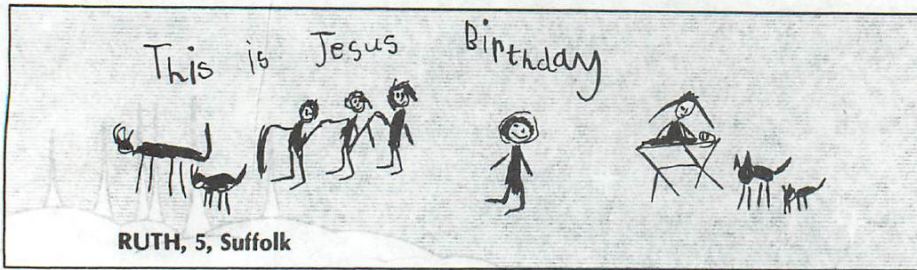
'But why did you give Mandy your bear when you like him so much?' asked Sally.

'Well,' said Ben, 'I remembered I hadn't got anything to give Jesus for His birthday. And I thought that if I gave William to Mandy and made her happy it would count as a present—it does count, doesn't it?'

'Yes, it counts very much,' said Peter.

So a happy Ben closed his eyes and dreamt about toy factories. Soon all three children were so fast asleep that they didn't notice a cloud approach their window. Nor did they wake when a very small man crept in with a large tin drum with 'Ben' written on the label. But the alarm clock did notice and was so nervous that his alarm rang again. But the three children just carried on dreaming.

©Margaret Gray 1978



**RUTH, 5, Suffolk**

HERE ARE things I did between last Christmas and this Christmas.

At the beginning of 1978 I was among the first 3 coloured children to be allowed in a private school. The school used to be strictly for white children for 30 years. I am 9 years old and my first year among children of a different race was very difficult. I am all right in class and enjoy the method of teaching very much and I can cope well, but find it hard to play with white children. It is not easy to be carefree with them and to play imaginary games.

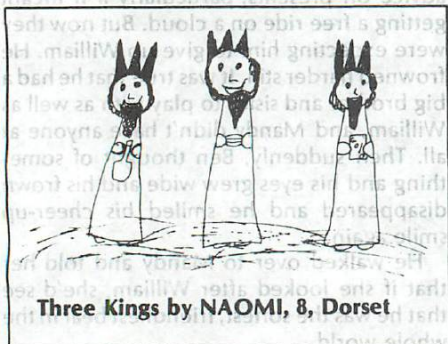
I miss my friends at the coloured school but I hope I will develop the same kind of friendships here.

**ULRIC, 9, Somerset West, South Africa**

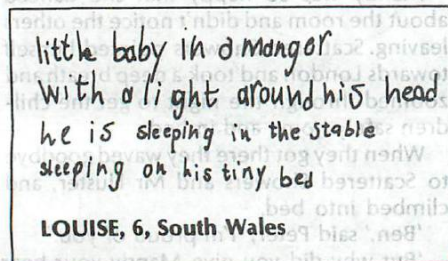


**One of the Shepherds looking at the star**

**OLIVER, 10, London**



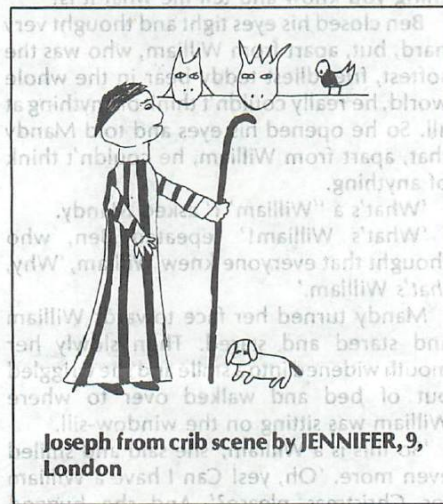
**Three Kings by NAOMI, 8, Dorset**



**LOUISE, 6, South Wales**

WE CELEBRATE Christmas because Jesus Christ was born. Nobody knows his exact date of birth. Christmas is about giving because Jesus gave us love, kindness and truth. He gave up His life to save us, so we must give up things we want to others who need them.

**JUDY, 9, Yorkshire**



**Joseph from crib scene by JENNIFER, 9, London**

MY SISTER AND I did a bring and buy for Mother Teresa and raised 31 pounds 10 pence to help poor children in Calcutta.

We thought that we should have a bring and buy for the children of Calcutta for they will be more happy and give them a nice treat this Christmas time.

**JAMES, 7, Yorkshire**



**Three Kings by IAN, 6, London**

THE MOST IMPORTANT thing about Christmas is Jesus's birth. He spent His life in doing good, never thinking of Himself.

We give each other presents because God gave us a present, His son. He was born in a manger. Mary and Joseph went up to Bethlehem to be taxed, but all the houses and the inns were full. At last one kind innkeeper said that they could spend the night in his stable, because there was lots of hay there and it was nice and warm. So they went in, and early that morning Mary had a baby called Jesus.

Today, in this country, we celebrate Christmas by going to church and singing Christmas carols. When we were in India we had at least 14 people to lunch in the flat, and about 40 for tea. I remember a great big balloon which was about three times the size of a normal one. I remember telling a school friend about it, and her telling me to bring it to school to prove it, but when I brought it to school it was about half the size of a normal one!

**PHILIPPA, 9, Kent**



**Family singing carols by JENNIFER, 8, London**