

CITY CHRISTMAS SHOPPING IS UP 20 PER CENT

Survey Reveals Increase in
Bank Clearings
Over 1932.

Prosperity is at least preparing to gather enough momentum to round that corner, judging from a survey of large department stores throughout the country, including Indianapolis.

Christmas shopping in Indianapolis, according to reports from the survey for the first two weeks of December, average about 20 per cent over the corresponding sales in 1932.

This is tops the average increase of approximately 18 per cent for cities by two points. Chicago rates 16 per cent increase, Philadelphia, 3 per cent, Detroit 3 per cent and Cincinnati 10 per cent.

Bank Figures Cheering

Leading Indianapolis merchants report that for the first time since 1928, sales volume, customer volume and dollar volume have increased to a point where they compare more favorably with the years of prosperity.

While all the outward signs of better times, crowds in the stores and on the streets, are obvious, the merchants have gone to bank clearing figures and other statistics to prove their points.

From \$8,458,000 bank clearings in the week ending Dec. 2, the figures have climbed to \$10,053,000 for the week ending Dec. 16.

Last year, while routine business increased during the holiday season, bank clearings declined as Christmas approached. The figures still short of those established at the peak of prosperity are nevertheless climbing steadily, according to merchants.

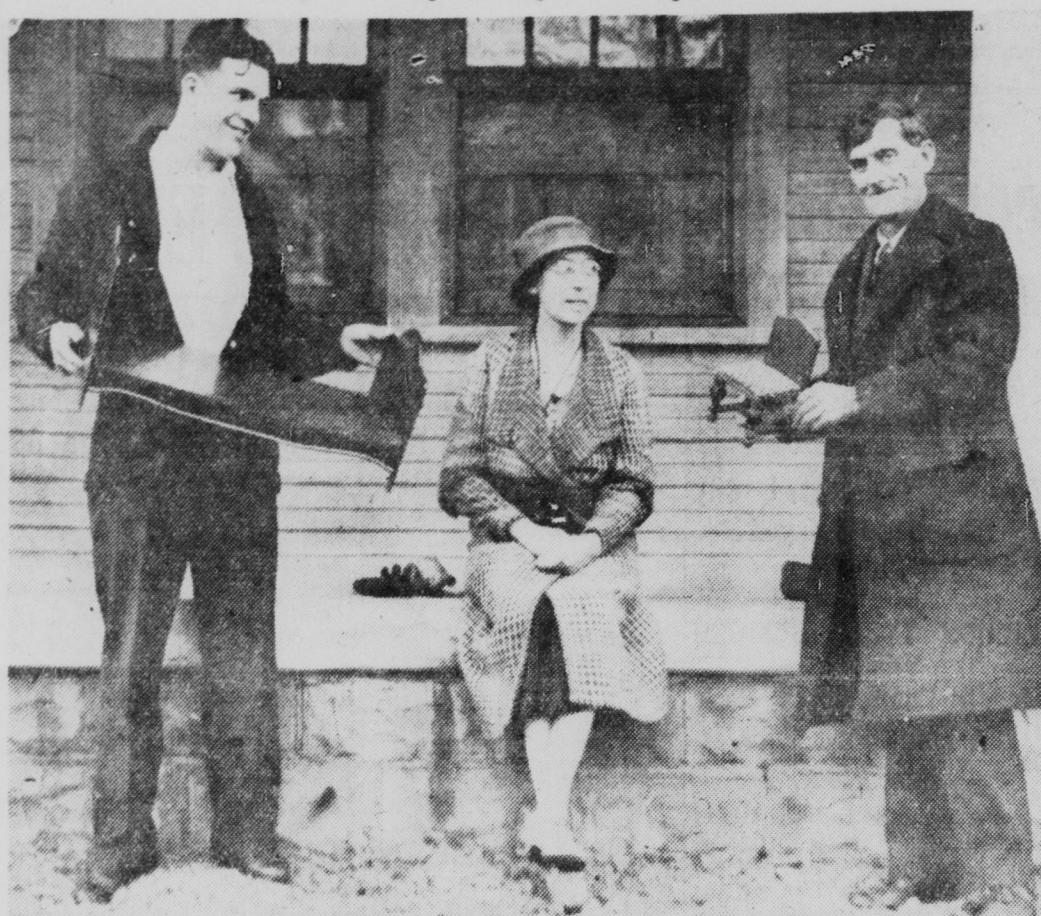
CWA Given Credit

One of the factors cited as partly responsible for the spurt is the CWA program. Since Nov. 23 the Civil Works Administration has added \$544,370 to the purchasing power in Marion county and 11,158 men and women, previously unemployed, have obtained jobs in connection with the civil works project.

Four hundred more sacks of mail than in 1932 at the holiday season, sent from Indianapolis and 1,000 more sacks of incoming mail over the same period last year, attest to a definite upturn.

Merchants in the city have noted a definite trend in the buying of individual rather than household gifts this season. And jewelry—that barometer of good or bad times—has ceased to be a drug on the market and is selling well during the present Christmas shopping.

Rusty Metal From Dump Heaps Made Into Shiny Toys by City 'Santa Claus'



Brightwood Jobless Man Toils in Kitchen to Cheer Children.



Every child knows the accepted version of Santa Claus. In a perfectly appointed work shop, he toils with his merry gnomes all the year. Christmas eve he speeds across the roof tops in his sleigh, drawn by Dance and Prancer, and the other nimble-footed reindeer.

From the huge sack on his back, Santa Claus selects toys for good little girls and boys, and hurries back to his home at the North Pole. That's the story as millions of boys and girls all over the world know it.

There's a different version for Indianapolis children who know Homer Weaver, 2057 Valley avenue. To them, he is the real Santa Claus.

There's no well-equipped workshop for "Santa Claus" Weaver. He does his work in the kitchen of his home, with tools many of which he has made himself.

The materials from which he makes the toys are not shining new metals or brightly painted bits of wood.

Mr. Weaver salvages his toy material from the dump heaps of the city. From old tin cans, bits of dilapidated automobiles and old cigar boxes, for many years he has fashioned miniature sets of furniture, toy washing machines, and small automobiles and trucks.

Like the mythical Santa Claus, Mr. Weaver gives his home-made toys to the children of his acquaintance at Christmas time.

The Santa Claus of the stories is a well-fed, hearty old fellow. But this Indianapolis amateur Santa Claus knows the pinch of cold weather, when there isn't enough fuel to keep the fire in the kitchen stove going. Then he has to rub

his fingers together to keep them warm enough to work on the toys. Santa Claus of the story-books has a well-fed, round body; he radiates the cheer gained through good living.

Mr. Weaver's short thin body is clothed in the poorest of garments.

He knows the struggle of living on "provisions" from the trustee's office, for he has been on the city relief list for many, many months.

Yet his smile is as contagious as that of the gentleman who receives his mail addressed "Santa Claus, North Pole." And Mr. Weaver gets the same delight from seeing children play with the toys he has made.

Mr. Weaver is a member of the Brightwood Self Help Unit, an organization of unemployed men and women, who have attempted in the past year to better their living conditions by exchanging their services among themselves and in the community.

Under his direction, this year a toy shop has been opened by the unit.

Together with Charles Davis and Jesse Wert, two other members of the organization, Mr. Weaver has made complete outfits of doll furniture, which are being sold. Proceeds from the sales of the shop will be used in relief work among the members of the Brightwood organization.

The work in the toy shop has been sponsored by members of the Alpha Epsilon chapter of Delta Theta Tau sorority, under the direction of a committee composed of Mrs. C. M. Davis, Mrs. Paul Stubbs, Mrs. E. D. Dyer, and Miss Roberta Bruce. The committee works with Miss Gertrude Brown, organizer of the unit.

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