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Transcript of a sound recording in MS 608, WLBZ Radio Station Records, Bangor, Maine, 1931-1973

Title: University of Maine Radio Guild Christmas Program

Date: December 17, 1948

Recording number: D 16.41; CD 7, track 4

Length of recording: 14:40

[transcript begins]

MR. UNIVERSITY: This is Mr. University speaking. The University of Maine Radio Guild, in cooperation with this station, presents University Town transcribed. University Town is like any town or community, perhaps yours. It's represented by all classes, denominations, and races. It's democratic. It has its leaders and its followers and affords the opportunity for all to become leaders.

[Music plays.]

It's Christmas Eve on the University of Maine campus. A tree is being trimmed by the Brown family. Mrs. Brown, Jean, 17, a Maine sophomore, Bobby, a high school freshman and Poochie the corker. Two members of the Brown family are absent, professor Brown who is returning on the morning train from a scientific meeting, and Paul, the 24-year-old son who was killed in a highway crash exactly a year ago on Christmas Day.

The members of the Brown family present are trying valorously to boost each other's morale on this tragic anniversary. Bobby, on the stepladder says...

BOBBY: Where'd you get the new lights, Mom? They're [shrewd?]

MOTHER: [Dodd's?] And be careful not to get them too close to the tips of the boughs. They'll fall off when the end needles dry up.

BOBBY: That's Poochie scratching. Let him in, will you, sis?

SIS: That darn dog.

BOBBY: Oh, you're just prejudiced because he's not a Phi Gam. By the way, what you giving that Figi heartbeat of yours? I know what he's giving you.

SIS: You do? Oh, you don't.

BOBBY: Yeah, sure I do. The gate if he's wise. Hey, cut it out. Let go of the ladder. Mom... [Sound of something cracking.] See, you smashed a light. Grab Poochie. He might eat it.

MOTHER: Calm down, you children. Lucky for you it was a new one.

BOBBY: That's a funny way to figure. You like those old ornaments whipped up in the horse and buggy days better than you do the knock outs you bought yesterday.

SIS: Funny boy, who you fooling? So do you. I'd like to know what would happen if I dropped your [pet gold one?] Aunt Pat gave you when you were five.

BOBBY: That's the day you die. Where is it? Give me it. That's for the space near the top.

SIS: No. I won't my old Santa Claus lights there.

BOBBY: Oh, that old Santa Claus light of yours is too beat up.

MOTHER: Beat up?

BOBBY: Oh, well, busted.

MOTHER: You two members of your advanced generation, aren't you concerned with tradition?

BOBBY: What do you mean by tradition?

MOTHER: Oh, it's a pleasant disease. You'll [eventually?] contract it. Even through your tough hearts. Here. Put the blue star, put the blue star where Paul hung it, up, the blue star, we are

SIS: Mother...

BOBBY: We thought...

MOTHER: You thought you'd hide the blue star? Because it might upset me? That's not a healthy way to manage. Your brother Paul loved Christmas and its traditions, too. I'm sure he would be unhappy if he thought he'd destroyed it for us. Let's try to look at it this way, Dad and Paul are away tonight. We'll see one a little sooner than the other, that's all. In the meantime we'll go on thinking of the both 'til they come, planning and living happily 'til they come, Dad tomorrow, Paul a little later. Now get on with the tree.

VOICE of PAUL: Good girl, Mother. I couldn't have said it better myself.

MOTHER: Did the doorbell ring?

BOBBY: I didn't hear it. Why?

MOTHER: I thought it must have rung. Poochie's ears cocked toward the door. The Stetsons said they might drop over later, but not this late.

PAUL: Put your ears down, Poochie, or I'll pin them back for you, and quit following me with your eyes. I want to get a good look at this family and this room. Bobby, did I get here in time to hear Mom read the Christmas story yet? Ask her.

BOBBY: Mom? When did you stop telling up the Christmas story?

SIS: Bobby.

BOBBY: I didn't remember your reading it last year.

SIS: Bobby, for heaven's sake, stop it.

BOBBY: Criminy, of course not. I forgot.

MOTHER: Oh, I wasted my breath, didn't I? You must stop feeling guilty if you happen to bring up things associated with Paul. You'd have to stop talking entirely. Paul is part of our life. I thought I made that clear. No, I didn't read the Christmas story last year or the year before

PAUL: Sis, go to work. Get her to read it.

SIS: Do it, Mom, while we finish the tree.

MOTHER: All right, if I can remember it. Don't drop trimming the tree, though. It's almost midnight. And put the blue star on the top

BOBBY: I will if I can reach. If I can't make it, I'll wait for Dad. See, if the ladder was just a little longer.

PAUL: Here, let me.

BOBBY: Hey, I did it.

PAUL: That's what you think, youngster.

MOTHER: See, it came to pass in those days, Bobby, don't reach so far. Move the ladder. And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed and all went to be taxed, everyone in to his own city, and Joseph also went up from Galilee out of the city of Nazareth into Judea into the City of David which is called Bethlehem because he was the house of lineage of David. To be taxed with Mary, his espoused wife, being great with child. And so it was that while they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered and she brought forth her first born son and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in this same country shepherds abiding in the fields keeping watch over their flock by night. And lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them and the glory of the Lord shone round about them and they were so afraid, and the angel said unto them fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David a savior which is Christ the Lord, and it shall be a sign unto you. You shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. And suddenly, there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying glory to God in the highest and on Earth, peace, good will to men.

SIS and BOBBY, together: Thanks, Mom.

PAUL: Thank you, Mother.

SIS: This piano needs tuning.

MOTHER: Sing that, Sis. Bobby, hasn't finished yet.

SIS: Hurry up, Bob. I was up 'til 2 last night.

[Sings the Coventry Carol.]

MOTHER: Nice. I always liked Paul's favorite, too, Silent Night. How about it?

SIS: If, if you're sure...

MOTHER: Of course I'm sure.

SIS: [Sings Silent Night to the lyric "mother and child." Voice cracks.] I can't.

PAUL: None of that, now, Sis. Come on, I'll help you. [Sings Silent Night, eventually joined by SIS.]

MOTHER: Lovely, Sis. Run along now, I'll turn out the lights. You've done a good job with the tree. It's beautiful, but off to bed now.

BOBBY: Can I take Poochie up with me?

MOTHER: Oh, I guess so, he'll sneak up later, anyway.

BOBBY: 'Night, mom.

MOTHER: 'Night.

SIS: 'Night, Mother. You sure you're all right?

MOTHER: Of course I'm all right. [Long pause.] Oh, Paul.

PAUL: I'm all right, Mother.

MOTHER: Practice what you preach, you fool.

PAUL: That's the girl. Merry Christmas, Mother. Merry Christmas.

MR. UNIVERSITY: Tonight's script, Christmas Story, was written by Mrs. Arthur Stevens who also played the part of the mother. Paul was played by Paul Payson. Sis by Priscilla Goggin, Bobby by Wendell Hodgkins. Paul Payson was at the organ, Rita Grayon assisted in production. This transcribed program was presented by the University of Maine Radio Guild in cooperation with this station. This is the Maine Broadcasting Company.

[transcript ends]

For more information about this transcript, audio recording, or other materials in Special Collections at the University of Maine, contact:

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