

# FAMILY CHRISTMAS CUSTOMS

FROM AUNT SARAH (Rockenbach) Belcher

## THE TULIP COOKIE

"Tulip" means "Turkey". Tulip bulbs were introduced into Austria and then into Holland around 1566. The tulip mania developed in U.S.A.

The Franklin family (mother father and 2 girls) who were friends of Elizabeth and Ruth Rockenbach, lived on Elm Street in Deerfield next to Preston Rockenbach. They became very wealthy and later moved to California. Preston and Lida followed, as they were close friends. One tulip bulb would often bring up to a \$1,000. In 1647 tulips bottomed out and many Dutch Merchants lost a fortune. The two Franklin girls became bitter enemies as they fought over the fortune their parents left them.

So I thank the Lord for the simple cardboard cookie pattern Ruth passed on to me in 1940. She received it from Aunt Irene and Viola, they received it from their mother, Sarah Ott Rockenbach. And the custom was for the whole family to each have a frosted tulip cookie on their plate when we sat down for breakfast. My father, Almon Rockenbach, received a tulip cookie from his two sisters, if he didn't get to Deerfield, IL to pick it up they mailed the cookie to him, which I'm sure made him think of his childhood home on Saunders Road which he left in 1899 to marry my mother, Elizabeth (Lizzie) (Catlow) Rockenbach.

The Catlow introduced the orange candy cane routine from England for their Christmas breakfast. Children in the land of my grandfather, Joseph Catlow birth often received an orange in their Christmas stocking as they were a delicacy and very dear. All proceeded to see who could be the first to receive juice from the orange by sucking it up through the candy cane. This still continues, as well as the Tulip Cookies, as a holiday family enjoyment.