

Ginger for luck, say the Walds

DENNIS
CRAIG'S
DIARY



IT seemed to Herman Wald that his luck would never change. For nearly 30 years he had been a struggling sculptor — though he fought hard to establish himself. In 1952 he took a gamble he couldn't afford and exhibited in America where the "New York Times" art critic likened him to Jacob Epstein.

Back in his adopted homeland, South Africa, he got a few commissions but even two years ago, when his wife Vera discovered she was going to have a third child, their joy was overshadowed by the thought of expense.

But the little auburn-haired boy they named Louis has acted like a good-luck charm to Herman and Vera Wald.

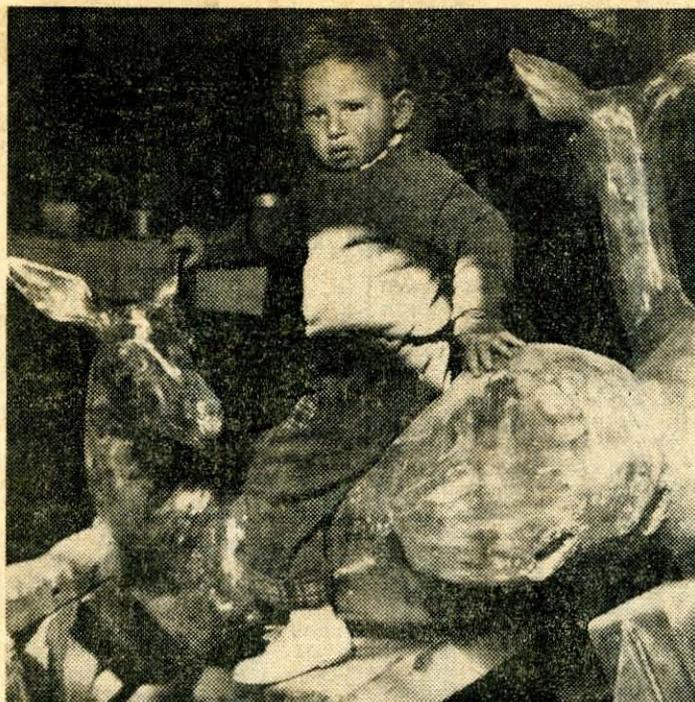
"Just 10 minutes after I got back from the nursing home to see my newly-born son," Mr. Wald told me yesterday, "Anglo-American called me to say that a bust I had done of Sir Ernest Oppenheimer had been accepted."

From that moment, things have gone well with this Hungarian-born sculptor with the white hair and leonine features.

SUCCESS

DURING the past year, when he was commissioned to sculpt monumental fountains with figures for Kimberley and Johannesburg, he has probably been the busiest artist in South Africa.

His fee in each case runs into thousands of pounds, but



THE CHILD WHO BROUGHT GOOD FORTUNE TO HIS PARENTS — LOUIS WALD USES ONE OF DADDY'S DEER AS A ROCKING-HORSE. Above left: Sculptor Herman Wald.

to earn it he has toiled from sunrise to sunset in his studio, which he built himself.

"The Johannesburg fountain with its 18 leaping, life-sized impala would normally have taken a year to complete. I did it in four months."

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I found his concept of this work interesting.

"I hope that my deer, which will have the appearance of real, jumping impala, will give Johannesburg workers and shoppers a lift when they pass them each day.

"That was certainly the re-

action of those who saw them before they went to be cast at Pretoria.

PROPHECY

MR. AND MRS. WALD, who now live in a comfortable house in Parktown North, told me how they lived and worked in a one-room flat in De Villiers Street.

"In that little flat I even cast the 16-figured statue in honour of S.A. Sappers which is now in the Johannesburg War Museum."

Mrs. Wald sighed. "When we were married nearly 20 years ago, Herman warned me of the life I could expect by telling me one of his many aphorisms. He said, 'Artists are the only kings crowned dead.'

"It looked for many years as if he had written his own life story in those few words. Now he has proved himself wrong."