

## Customs of Many Lands Today's Xmas

The modern Christmas, now traditional in most of the lands in which it is observed, is the result of amalgamation of the customs of many people. No other body of folk customs is so cosmopolitan as those surrounding Christmas.

"Santa Claus" and the custom of exchanging gifts comes from Asia Minor and the Netherlands, as does the Christmas stocking, but the physical concept of Santa today is of American origin. The lighted Christmas tree we get from Germany; the tinsel and ornaments on the tree from southern Europe; and Holly and mistletoe we owe to the Druids of early England, and carols to Middle Age England and France. The creche is from Italy.

...rive from Italy, nuts, gifts and raisins from Spain.

Christmas fare also represents a melding of the traditions of various peoples. Oldest of the usual elements of the Christmas dinner is the mince pie. It goes back to the Middle Ages in Europe where it was originally baked in an oblong shape to represent the manger of the Nativity. One was supposed to eat 12 of them between Christmas Night and Twelfth Night (January 6). The recipe had symbolism: it was supposed to represent the gold, frankincense and myrrh of the Magi. The crust was the gold; the spices the myrrh; the aroma, the frankincense.

The Christmas turkey is an American innovation now well-established in England and other countries. A boar's head was the traditional Christmas course in England until the time of James I. That monarch hated pork and ordered fowl served at the royal table instead. This introduced a custom of serving swan, peacock or goose. No one who has ever read Dickens' "Christmas Carol" forgets the description of the Cratchits' Christmas dinner:

"There never was such a goose cooked. Its tenderness and flavour, size and cheapness, were the themes of universal admiration. Eked out by apple-sauce and mashed potatoes, it was a sufficient dinner for the whole family . . ."

"Yet everyone had had enough, and the youngest Cratchits in particular were steeped in sage and onion to the eyebrows! But now, the plates being changed by Miss Belinda, Mrs. Cratchit left the room alone — too nervous to bear witness — to take the pudding up, and bring it in. "Suppose it should not be done enough! Suppose it should break in turning out! Suppose somebody should have got over the wall of the backyard, and stolen it while they were merry with the goose."

"Hail! A great deal of steam! The pudding was out of the copper. A smell like washing day! That was the cloth. A smell like an eating house and a pastry-cook's next door to each other, with the laundress's next to that! That was the pudding. In half a minute Mrs. Cratchit entered, flushed, but smiling proudly, with the pudding, like a speckled cannon-ball, so hard and firm, blazing in half of half-a-quarter of ignited brandy and stuck into the top."

The Cratchits could not have been expected to have a Christmas tree. The tree was not popular in England till one was introduced in the royal palace by the German Prince Albert in 1841, after he married future Queen Victoria. The tree had been an established custom in Germany for centuries. There is a tradi-

tion that it was a custom started by Martin Luther, but this is questioned.

Evergreen twigs were used for decorating at the time of the festival of the Nativity by Christ—before Luther. Holly and ivy also were identified with the holiday at a very early date.

Holly represented the master of the house, whereas ivy represented the mistress. Holly was considered to be sacred and sedate; ivy was assumed to be of a very riotous nature.

Mistletoe among the early Druids represented love. In the early Christian church it was made customary to bestow the "kiss of peace" at Christmas time. These two symbols have become interwoven in the custom of kissing under the mistletoe.

A Christmas tradition as old as any, the yule log, is dying out in this age of apartments with gas logs and houses with oil-heating. In olden time, the Yule log had to be brought home by the menfolk on Christmas Eve and kindled by the women with the remains of the previous year's log kept specially for the purpose. The girls had to first wash their hands before setting the log ablaze. It was believed that the devil was powerless to do mischief to households where the yule log had been properly burned.

### Cedars of Lebanon Are Well Protected

On a shelf-like plateau, 600 feet above the Mediterranean, the world's oldest Christmas trees stand where they have stood for centuries. The cedars of Lebanon, 400 of them, are protected by religion and law from harm at the hands of either Moslems or the Maronite Christians.

The magnificent trees "that sing the nativity" were venerated as monarchs among trees long before Judah had her first king. Some of them have a girth of 40 feet and a branch circumference of 300.

In the days of the conquerors thousands of conscripted Hebrew workers were sent into the Lebanon to take the Jerusalem "cedar trees without number;" the result of one of the first building contracts, between Hiram of Phoenicia and King Solomon.

Today, however, the trees are protected by law and the department of agriculture of the government sponsors the planting of seedlings, so that the giant cedars will grow forever.

### AN ANSWER ANYWAY

For awhile Tom Zellinger of David City thought he might have the solution to accounts about flying saucers. Zellinger saw a white billowing object land west of his farm. When he and airport officials investigated, they found a weather balloon and parachute rigging which had drifted 200 miles from the North Platte weather bureau.

## A Gift for the Home at Any Price



**UNDER \$10.** She will love this mirror-backed wall shelf to display her China or knick knacks to the best advantage—yet safe from little prying fingers. Finish is mahogany. (Butler Specialty Co.)



**UNDER \$20.** This silent valet is a neat gift item for Santa Claus himself. Made of mahogany veneer, it is collapsible and may be hung in the closet when not in use. (Stuckley Brothers, Inc.)



**UNDER \$30.** This Maple sewing table is an indispensable gift item for the busy home maker. It also doubles as an end table next to her favorite chair. (Lewisburg Chair and Furniture Co.)



**UNDER \$40.** A gift of great charm is this dainty boudoir chair. Select one to match or harmonize with her color scheme. (Newton Mfg. Co., Inc.)



**UNDER \$70.** For the television fan this TV rocker on a swivel base provides the very ultimate in luxurious seating comfort. (Fort Smith Chair Co.)



**OVER \$300.** Here is a big ticket item—a magnificent breakfast room that you will want to mention in your will. Finish is fruitwood. (Uasper Cabinet Co.)

The colored hard candles de-

## MILLER THEATRE

Atkinson, Nebr.

Friday-Saturday Dec. 12-13

**CAVE OF OUTLAWS**  
CAREY SMITH  
"The Great Hunt of 1927" — THE GREAT HILLS RANGE ROBERT

**YOUNG MAN WITH IDEAS**  
GLENN FORD  
RUTH ROMAN DENISE DARCEL

Sun.-Mon.-Tues. Dec. 14-15-16

**BEND OF THE RIVER**  
"How Adventures!"  
"The Untamed Northwest"

**The Man With a Cloak**  
"A Great Clue in the Mystery of the Year!"  
"The O'Brien Mystery"

**Dr. Rex W. Wilson, M.D.**  
PHYSICIAN & SURGEON  
Offices, 128 W. Douglas St.  
O'Neill  
Phones: Office 138, Res. 158

# Christmas Special!

Let us buy your Christmas Dinner when you buy any model IH Refrigerator or Freezer before December 25. Yes, we'll provide a big Turkey and all the "trimmings"—ABSOLUTELY FREE OF ANY EXTRA CHARGE!

more than "automatic" **Tri-Matic** defrosting in the new **INTERNATIONAL HARVESTER Refrigerators**

**SIMPLE AS A-B-C**

**A. Automatic.** Fully automatic defrosting. No foods to remove, no water to empty. Frozen foods stay brick-hard.

**B. By Manual Control.** Fast, electric defrosting any time you wish. A welcome convenience.

**C. Conventional.** Defrost slowly if you wish. Handy when you clean interior of refrigerator.

Color... INSIDE  
Color... OUTSIDE  
Model G-93-D  
\$419<sup>95</sup>

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eight models . . . eight sizes . . . eight prices . . . from \$229.95.

## HARLEY HARDWARE

CHAMBERS, NEBRASKA

## Christmas Seal Product of Clerk

Credit for conceiving the idea for Christmas seals belongs to a Danish postal clerk, Einer Holboell, who in the holiday season of 1903 was sorting mail in the postoffice of Copenhagen. As he went through the stacks of Christmas mail, it occurred to him that if each sender bought a sticker and attached it to each package, the proceeds would aid in fighting tuberculosis and add color to the gifts.

He mentioned it to some of his fellow workers. The scheme appealed to them and it was passed along through the office. The clerks discussed it with customers. The idea spread about Copenhagen, and eventually King

Christian heard about it. The ruler approved and decided in favor of trying it with Queen Louise's likeness on each stamp.

It was too late to put the idea into execution that year but in 1904, four million seals were sold in the Copenhagen postoffice.

So popular did the stamps become that Holboell heard of one old woman who returned some letters without Christmas seals, declaring emphatically that she didn't want to know people who didn't use the stamps.

A woman, Miss Emily Bissell, who worked with the Red Cross, started the sale of seals in this country. She was seeking \$300 for a little open air hospital for tuberculosis patients. She designed a stamp and persuaded friends to help with the printing and sale of them. When the campaign bogged down, she went to Philadelphia where she met

Leigh Mitchell Hodges, a columnist for the Philadelphia North American. He heard Miss Bissell's plans and discussed them with E. A. Van Valkenburg, city editor. Van Valkenburg gave full approval and told Hodges to give the project his entire time. He also asked for 50,000 seals to be sold in the newspaper's office.

The campaign brought startling results. Miss Bissell found she had \$3,000 instead of \$300 she had started to raise. And the Christmas seal campaign became a nation-wide institution.

### CAN YOU TOP THIS?

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Spellman of Doniphan seem to have set a record of some sort recently — they became grandparents of four boys within one week.

In the Middle Ages, May day was observed as a great public holiday in England.

# AT LEES... Christmas Hits

**GIFT TIES**

For the man in your life! Fine quality silks and satins in an exciting collection of gay patterns and bright colors! They look higher priced, but they're just . . . . .

**\$1**

**GIFT SOCKS**

Always at the top of the man's gift list. Fine quality mercerized argyles and rayon banner-wraps. Good looking socks, beautiful patterns. Regular or ankle length. Pair . . . . .

3 prs. **1.49** in gift box

**POSTSCRIPT NYLONS**

Sheer beauty in these lovely nylons . . . a perfect gift for her "Christmas stocking!" 15 denier, 51 gauge in all the new fall shades. Buy the box!

**3 Pair \$2.89**

**Ty-Rack**

A perfect gift for the gentleman. Keeps his ties together, neat and straight. Gold colored, plastic tie selector. Revolves for easy selection.

**98c**

**BRACH'S 5 LB. POINSETTIA BOX CHOCOLATES**

A big, delightful 5 pound box of those famous Brach's chocolates. Creams, caramels, and nougats. Light and dark chocolates.

**\$2.98**

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O'NEILL, NEBRASKA