

The Story of Christmas Customs of Many Lands

Miss Jessie M. Robertson Presents Interesting Sketch at W. C. T. U. Meeting.

The following interesting story of the Christmas customs of many lands was given on Monday at the W. C. T. U. meeting by Miss Jessie M. Robertson and the Journal is pleased to give this sketch of the yuletide season:

Christmas, December 25th.
The greatest religious holiday of all, the reputed anniversary of the birth of Jesus Christ. Kept by Anglican, Armenian, Greek, Roman Catholic and Protestant churches.
Early historians credit the celebration to pagan origin. One legend is that in order to appease the heathen tribes and reconcile them to the Christian religion the celebration was held on the pagan celebration of the Solstrice. The 25th of December approximates that of the old Roman Saturnalia and the later Roman festival of the sun-god Mithras; the winter festival of the heathen Britons; and, the Scandinavian Yule.

Christmas was not adopted as a regular festival until the fourth century, but Clement of Alexandria wrote about it in the beginning of the third century and Chrysostom wrote of it in the latter part of the fourth century as a custom of long standing. It was in the year 314 A. D. that the Roman Bishop Liberius designated December 25, as the birthday of Christ.

Holland and Belgium.
The children of Holland observe December 5, as their "gift-giving" day. Here ginger bread men, women, and children, cats, dogs, and every kind of animal imaginable are found in the shop windows. The evening before the children place two wooden shoes by the hearth or outside the door. On one is placed a note of wishes for things they hope St. Nicholas would bring, and in the other is placed some straw, and bread and beans for "Knecht Cobles" as they call St. Nicholas' horse in Holland. The room in which the shoes are left is closed and the door locked.

The next morning the children feel very sure that Santa and his horse have come down the chimney for they have taken the food, turned the room upside down in their efforts and left gifts for good children and bits of charcoal and birch rods for the naughty ones.

Another old custom among the young men of Holland is for them to gather in the central part of the town about two in the morning and sing carols. One of the youths carries a single star set on a pole and lighted from within by a candle. When the carols have been sung, the young men march to the home of one of the rich men of the town and are treated to a feast.

Spain
The children of Spain the day before their "Naclimentos"—plaster refigure Christmas are busy arranging sentation of the birth of Christ. There is a little manger, which the child covers with green. Here he places the tiny figure of the Baby Jesus. Around Him he groups plaster figures of Joseph and Mary and the wise men, and often of the angels too. The ox and the ass are represented also. Tiny candles are burned. After mass and a merry breakfast the children make "aguinaldo"—giving of presents.

Austria-Hungary.
In Croatia all thru the year the best of every crop and of all other provisions have been saved for the Christmas feast. From the forest is brought an enormous log to be put into the stove on Christmas, after wine has been sprinkled over the wood. The three wax tapers that are to be an important part of the celebration have been made by the oldest woman of the family. Two loaves of bread are baked to represent the Old and New Testaments. When Christmas Eve comes, the family wait for the church bells to ring out and summon each family to assemble in the living room. On the Christmas table stand the three candles ready to be lighted. Beside the candles, are the two loaves of bread and a small cup filled with grains.

The father lights a candle and bids the whole family to join in a hymn, then he goes to the table with the burning candle in his hand and says: "Christ is born!" The children, with reverent voices join in reply: "Is born, is really born!" The taper is then placed in the hand of each child, who stands on the bench by the stove and says three times: "Praised be the Lord! Christ is born!" The others say: "Praise the name of the Lord forever and may He grant thee life and health!"

On Christmas day the father lights the second taper, and after he has said a short prayer, he blows out the lighted candle and pushes it down into the cup of grains. When he takes out the taper he examines it carefully, as the people of Croatia believe that which ever kind of grain sticks to the candle that kind will yield the biggest crop for the coming year.

The last candle is always burned on New Year's day, because the Christmas festival ends with the ending of the first day of the new year.

In other parts of Austria December 6 is the gift giving day. Wooden bowls are placed outside the door and in the morning the children find candies and sweets placed therein.

Germany
Santa Claus here is Kriss Kingle, of Christ Kindlein. The people light every window in their houses on Christmas eve so that the Christ Kindlein may more easily find His way from house to house. In the early morning a tiny figure representing the Christ Child is waved past the windows of the nursery so that the children will think the Christ Kindlein has not forgotten them.

A few days before Christmas the children made a list of the presents they would like given them, called "Wunschettel." In some parts of Germany there is said to appear on Christmas day a person called "Knecht Ruprecht," meaning "Servant Ruprecht." He goes round to every house and announces that his master has sent him to learn how the children have behaved. If the report is pleasing to him he helps Kriss Kingle by presenting gifts chosen for each child. To the parents of naughty boys and girls he leaves a rod and advises the frequent use of it.

There are no reindeer, sleighs or horses connected with Santa Claus here for he is supposed to go afoot and to ring the door bells for admission.

France
Several days before Christmas the little French child searches for the biggest pair of shoes that can be found about the house. On Christmas Eve he places them in a conspicuous place before the fireplace. For Pere Noel is supposed to favor shoes instead of stockings when hunting for a place to deposit his gifts.

Czecho-Slovakia
After the Christmas feast is spread, the daughters of the household are sprinkled from a bowl filled with honey and water, for this will insure them husbands "whose honesty is as transparent as water, and whose tempers are sweet as honey."

Serbia
Christmas here comes on the 16th of January, as they abide by the old calendar. The Serbians observe a six weeks fast before their Christmas. In each home as well as at the church, straw, symbolical of the manger birth of Christ is spread about the floors. No word of "Merry Christmas" is said until Christmas day and then for two weeks following, each Serbian is greeted with "Hristos se Rodi" (Christ is born) and will answer "Zaista se Rodi" (In truth He is born). The children hunt for their gifts, for they believe Santa Claus hides them about the house.

Bethlehem
Christmas Eve in the Church of the Nativity, Anglican and Armenian, Greek and Roman Catholic, and Protestant assemble both inside and outside to sing in unison. This is the place where Christ supposedly was born. Below the church is the cave, hollowed out of rock and in this cave is the manger.
The church has three chapels and is constructed in the form of a "T." One section is allotted to the Greek Catholics, another to the Roman Catholics and a third to the Protestants.

Candles
Tradition indicates that on the 25th of December was observed the Roman Feast of Saturn, when candles were not only used for illumination purposes to symbolize the increasing light of the year, but were also exchanged as gifts in token of cheerfulness and good will. The Jews, too, were accustomed to burn candles at that time, which happened to be their Feast of Dedication. The Greek church calls Christmas "The Feast of Lights." When the early Christians exchange these tapers they said 'I give you Christ—the light of the world.'

Carols
Carol means a song of rejoicing, of praise, which forms a part of the celebration of the great festivals of the Christian church, but associated most commonly with Christmas. It originally meant a song accompanied with dancing in which sense it is frequently used by the old poets. It appears to have been danced by many performers, taking hands, forming a ring and singing as they went around. The first carol, recorded in Luke II,

13-14 was sung by the angels on the plains of Bethlehem.
Carol singing was very popular in Europe in the Middle Ages and still is a special feature of the Christmas season in England where bands of men and boys known as "waits" go about the villages for several nights before Christmas singing carols in the open air. Christmas waits in England nowadays do not dress in costume, but in olden times they wore blue gowns with red sleeves and caps and a silver collar or chain about the neck.
The oldest extant copy of an English carol is in a book printed by Wynkn de Worde in 1521. This carol is still sung each Christmas at Queen's college, England. The earliest specimen of Christmas carol is a Norman-French noel of the 13th century now in the English museum.

The boar's head was anciently the first dish on Christmas day and was carried up to the principal table in the hall with great solemnity. In the year 1170, upon the day the young Prince Henry's coronation, King Henry the Second "serued his sonne at ye table as seruer, bryngyng up ye boares heade with trumpets, according to ye manner." For this indispensable ceremony there was a carol which Wynkn de Worde has given under the title "A Carol Bryngyng in ye Boares Heade."

"Was-halle!
Bring in, upon his silver tray,
With minstrelle,
The Boar's head, armed with garlands gay,
And rosemarie;
And lemmon in his tasked mo'
He laughs amain 'Noel!' I two—
Was-halle!
Be gay, ye lordlings, more or less
The Boar's head leads the Christmas mess.
Was-halle! Noel!
Give thanks to our Immanuel!"

Carol singing was popular during the Crusades and one of the carols used was written during the 13th century, and was used as the Crusaders reached along. It is entitled, "Three Kings." Their use in England seems to have been at its height under the Tudors. The universal familiarity with them is shown by the special prohibition in 1625 of "carols, balls, or merry making" when Henry VIII lay seriously ill.

In 1562 license was given to Thomas Tysdale to print "Vertayne goodly caroles to be sung to the glory of God."
The Puritans under Cromwell, in their general onslaught on the observance of Christmas when holly and ivy were made seditious badges, attempted to abolish carols, but they came back with the Restoration.

Most of the Russian carols are wilder and full of scenes that reflect the life of the people, they danced and played during the singing. The following is typical of their carols:
"Snow-bound mountains,
Snow-bound valleys,
Snow-bound plateaus, clad in white,
Fur-robed moujiks,
Fur-robed nobles,
Fur-robed children, see the light."

The French carols were softer, more melodious than those of the other countries. Their effect on other lands may be seen in hymns using the word "Noel" or "nowell."
In 1818 Joseph Mohr wrote "Silent Night," the best known of the modern carols.
Carols are sung annually on Boston Common, around community Christmas trees in many cities and villages, and for the past decade the choir of the President's church in Washington, D. C. has sung carols at the White House on Christmas Eve. In Plattsburgh for many years the young people of the Methodist church have sung carols at the state Masonic Home early Christmas mornings.

Cards
The first printed Christmas cards of record were issued in London in 1846, the first in the United States in 1862.
Flowers
The poinsettia was imported from South America about 1870 by Dr. Joel Poinsett, of Charleston, South Carolina. The chrysanthemums were introduced by florists from China and Japan.

Greenery
The custom of associating evergreen trees and greenery with Christmas had its origin in pagan custom. The early Christians found that in order to introduce Christianity into the world they must utilize many of the existing festivals of the pagan peoples they hoped to convert. Holly and mistletoe were used during the feast of Saturn, in fact the ancient Romans dedicated the holly blossom to Saturn. In order to avoid suspicion and persecution, the early Christians, too, hung holly in their homes—in memory of not Saturn but the Christ Child. And in time holly became a symbol of the Christmastide. The mistletoe for centuries was held in profound veneration by the

Druids, and when Rome conquered them the early Church Fathers permitted the mistletoe to be a part of the Christmas decorations.

Authorities differ somewhat concerning the origin of the custom of kissing under the mistletoe. Walsh is of the opinion that it is an innocent survival from the Saturnalia of the ancients when riot and license ran loose. Other authorities claim that it is a survival of the ancient Druids of Britain. The mistletoe is believed to have been given to the Goddess of Love to keep, and everyone who passed under it received a kiss to show it was the emblem of love. The Druids cut the sacred mistletoe and hung it over the doorways to propitiate the woodland spirits. According to myth, only happiness could enter under the mistletoe.

Use of the wreath is believed by authorities to be traceable to the pagan custom of decorating buildings and places of worship at the feast which took place at the same time as our Christmas. The wreath is not used to such a great extent in Europe as in America, altho decorations with evergreens are much used.

According to ancient belief, each kind of evergreen used for decorative purposes conferred special blessings on those who passed under them. Under holly insured good fortune, under bay denoted victory, under laurel imparted beauty, and under mistletoe aided love affairs.

Trees
There are many legends concerning the origin of the Christmas tree. The earliest comes from Egypt, and its origin dates from a period long anterior to the Christian era. The palm tree is known to put forth a branch every month and a spray of this tree, with twelve shoots on it, was used in Egypt at the time of the winter solstice, as a symbol of the year completed.

A later one is of German origin: "Martin Luther, one Christmas Eve, traveling alone over the snow-covered country, was so impressed with the beauty of landscape and sky with its thousands of glittering stars, that upon arriving home he attempted to describe the beauty to his wife and children. Suddenly an idea seized him. He went to the garden, cut off a small fir-tree, dragged it into the nursery, lit some candles on the branches and lighted them." Luther called this tree a "Weihnachtsbaum."
In the early eighties Mr. Fred Woodbury, of Altadena, California, when landscaping his great estate near that city, planted cedar trees along what is now Santa Rosa Drive, the beautiful link between Pasadena and Altadena and here during the Christmas holidays all California gathers.

At Christmastide the stately trees are decorated in brilliant Yule trappings and lights, for the whole holiday week, "Christmas Hill" becomes a shrine, with many thousands passing by.

Yule Log
The Yule Log is of Germanic origin, introduced into England by the Angles and Saxons.
Xmas
The X used in the abbreviation Xmas is derived from the fact that Christ was crucified. The symbol of the cross was thus introduced into the word Christmas. Another belief is that it is of non-Christian origin and represents "X" as standing for an unknown quantity.

St. Nicholas
The connection of St. Nicholas, from which came St. Nick, Saint Klaus, and Santa Claus dates from about the beginning of the fourth century. St. Nicholas was a bishop of Myra in Lycia, Asia Minor and is the patron saint of poor maidens, sailors, travelers, merchants and children. Little is known of his life. He was imprisoned during the Diocletian persecution and set at liberty by Constantine the Great.

The legend connecting his name with gift-giving is as follows: A nobleman in the town of Patara had three daughters, but was so poor he was unable to provide them with suitable marriage dowry. St. Nicholas heard of this; and going secretly to the nobleman's house at night he threw a purse of gold into an open window. This fell at the feet of the eldest daughter. On the second night St. Nicholas threw a second purse for the second daughter, and on the third night a third purse, but on this occasion the nobleman caught St. Nicholas and held him by his robe. St. Nicholas made him promise he would tell no one of his gifts. From this incident it became the custom for the older members to place gifts in the shoes or stockings of their young relatives and let them think St. Nicholas placed them there.

Advertising will keep the wheels of business turning, even in "depression times." Don't overlook that fact, Mr. Merchant.

New Tax Levies Not Up to Expectations in November

Frank P. Parish Is Released on \$5,000 Bail After Surrender on Indictment.

New York.—Frank P. Parish, who made \$16,000,000 fortune, bought the former presidential yacht Mayflower and organized a \$30,000,000 pipeline company by the time he was thirty-six years old, surrendered on a grand larceny indictment and denied the charge. Parish, who has homes in Kansas City and East Orange, N. J., organized the Missouri-Kansas Pipe Line Company, now in receivership, to bring natural gas 1,200 miles from the southwest to Illinois. He was president and director of the company. William M. Maguire, president of the W. G. Maguire, Inc., a Delaware corporation with officers in Chicago, who was one of the largest stockholders in the pipe line company, filed the charges on which Parish was indicted here.

The indictment charges the larceny of \$127,000 worth of bonds from the pipe line company and of three promissory notes aggregating \$63,500 on which Ralph B. Mayo, also a stockholder, nominally advanced money to the company. Maguire said the money advanced by Mayo actually came from his own pocket. He chose this method of assisting the company, he declared, because he did not wish it to become known that he was providing the funds.

Frederick J. Sullivan, attorney for Parish who was with him when he surrendered, said Parish had paid Maguire more than \$2,000,000 in commissions for selling natural gas and that Parish understood the notes and bonds were to be retained by him as a fund to finance legal resistance to certain plans of other public utility companies in the field and various banks. The bonds, in denominations of \$1,000, were issued by the Kentucky Natural Gas company, a subsidiary of the pipe line company.

Parish is alleged to have appropriated the bonds about Sept. 9. On that date a demand was made for them in the district attorney's office and Archibald Firestone, assistant district attorney who presented the case to the grand jury, said Parish refused to return them. Parish appeared before the grand jury at his own request, waiving immunity. He is reported to have shown the jurors photostatic copies of the bonds and to have made no denial that they were in his possession. He was taken to police headquarters following his surrender, fingerprinted and released in \$5,000 bail. A federal grand jury in Chicago indicted him last March on charges of using the mails to defraud.—State Journal.

SERBICE MEN PLAN FEAST

Washington.—Turkey by the ton has been provided for Uncle Sam's soldiers' and sailors' Christmas dinners in far flung parts of the world. Up the strange Yangtze river in China, under a summer sun in the Philippines and Panama Canal zone, as well as in shivering Alaska, the doughboys, the bluejackets and the leathernecks are whetting their appetites to feast on Sunday on all the holiday good things shipped thousands of miles for their special benefit.

Allowances were made months ago for from a pound to two pounds of turkey alone for every member of the forces in addition to all the traditional Christmas dinner trimmings. Roughly, the army and navy dinner order this year, at home and abroad, calls for 220 tons of turkey. Uncle Sam's bill for turkey this Christmas will approximate \$100,000. Five years ago the army and navy Christmas turkey cost nearly twice that sum.

CRISIS FOR JOBLESS COMES

Berlin.—Guenther Gereke, who reported to President Von Hindenburg on the job creation activities he is administering, subsequently revealed that the unemployment problem had become so acute it was beyond the capacity of private employers to grapple with and necessitated immediate state intervention. Commissioner Gereke especially emphasized that the stability of the mark will not be endangered by a provision of 500 million marks (almost 119 million dollars) for execution of an immediate job creation program. A special credit committee will control the financing so that non-essential expenditures will be avoided.

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PERSHING REACHES BEDSIDE

New York.—General Pershing was at the bedside of his brother, James F. Pershing, who lay dangerously ill in Manhattan General hospital. Pershing was rushed to the hospital after a heart attack. The general was notified in Washington and arrived at the hospital to find his brother unconscious.

He later revived sufficiently to recognize the general, physicians said, altho his condition remained critical. General Pershing was accompanied to the hospital by his sister, Miss May Pershing, and his son, Warren Pershing.

Nehawka Quarries Secure Big Stone Contract

Estimated That 28,000 Cubic Yards of Rip Rap Stone Will be Needed on Missouri River Work.

The contract was signed this week between the Kansas City Bridge Co., contractors on the improvement work on the Missouri river in this section, with the Cass County Quarries, by Ole Olson, superintendent of the latter company.

This contract has been under consideration for some time but the final details were not arranged until this week and signed up.

This will mean a great deal to Cass county people and especially the community where the quarries are located, as the means of employment for the men of these places.

The estimate is that the contract will require 1,000 cars of the stone for rip-rapping, which will mean that the loading yards at Nehawka will be a busy place for several months as the rock is prepared for shipment to Omaha for use on the river.

When the work at Omaha gets into full swing, Mr. Olson estimates that the quarry will employ some sixty men or more at the Nehawka quarries. While the winter season holds up the river work such a large force will not be necessary, however.

The Nehawka quarries opened for work in November and a large amount of stone has already been quarried from the rock hills just southwest of the town.

CHICAGO GANGSTER SLAIN

Chicago.—William Nydack, who police said was a former partner of "Smiling Joe" Filkowski, Cleveland's "public enemy" No. 1, was shot and killed when police sought to serve a warrant charging him with robbery. Nydack was slain by Detective Harry Miller, who was present on Monday when Frank Nitti, the Capone "enforcer," was shot and wounded, perhaps fatally, by another detective.

Miller asserted that Nydack and Filkowski kidnaped him and Detective Harry Lang a year ago, taking their weapons and stars, and then ejecting them from their car. Lang was the policeman who shot Nitti. Miller declared that when he entered Nydack's hotel room Nydack's wife and their thirteen year old son were present. He asked the mother and child to leave the room, Miller said, and then started to read the warrant. "Suddenly Nydack grabbed the warrant and tore it to bits," Miller said. "Then he reached for his pistol. I just beat him to the draw and shot him."

WORKS TO SET ASIDE DEAL

New York.—Samuel Untermyer, counsel for the Kreuger and Toll bondholders' committee headed by Bainbridge Colby, declared he would seek to have set aside a transaction by which he said International Telephone and Telegraph corporation acquired more than 600,000 shares of L. M. Ericsson Telephone company of Sweden.

Untermyer described the transaction, in which he said the shares were assigned to international on Dec. 9 in exchange for an \$11,000,000 loan to Kreuger and Toll, as a "perfectly brazen preference." He said he had been informed the Ericsson shares were worth between five and six million dollars. Consummation of the deal, he contended, was in violation of a court order restraining creditors of Kreuger and Toll from transferring any of the Swedish firm's property.

TRADE TREATY RENEWED

Berlin.—Annulment of the Franco-German trade treaty of 1927 was definitely avoided by the signing of an additional agreement effective February 1933. The contents of the new agreement were not divulged, pending its perusal and ratification by both governments.

Million Dollar Incomes Become Almost Extinct

Number of People Paying It Dwindles From 513 in 1929 to 75 for Last Year.

Washington.—The fantastic million-or-more incomes of gay '29, which poured millions in taxes into government coffers, have become so few that the year 1931, on near-final statistics, records but seventy-five, against 513 two years before. How many will be left in this year 1932 is still to be seen, but the Internal revenue bureau, in analysing the national net income for last year, announced a 6 1-2 billion drop in the national income from 1929 to 1931. For the latter year the total was \$16,341,994,610.

Individual tax payers reported net income of \$13,221,352,042, a drop of \$3,959,401,578. Corporations reported net income of \$8,110,642,568, which was a decrease of \$2,516,072,005. The number of individual taxpayers who filed returns in 1931 was 3,116,317, of which 1,445,007 paid a tax and 1,661,310 were not taxable. The number filing returns was 260,235 less than 1930. In the corporation group 493,293 made returns and 170,683 paid a tax, which was 143,729 less than the number which paid the previous year.

The net income of individuals showed a decrease of 23.17 percent, while the amount of tax paid dropped 49.06. The corporations making returns showed a decline of \$2,516,670,427 in net income and 46.44 percent in taxes. Corporations making returns reported gross income of \$44,512,434,454 as compared with \$79,147,023,818 the previous year and \$129,633,791,720 in 1929.

Net losses reported by corporations totaled \$116,406,978 in 1931, as compared to \$618,246,431 in the preceding year, and \$392,177,216 in 1929. Individuals reported gross income of \$16,663,857,713 and took deductions for \$1,043,625,622 for net losses from sale of real estate, stocks, bonds, etc., other than reported for tax credit from sale of assets held for more than two years. They deducted \$128,613,116 for net losses from business and partnerships, took deductions of \$318,885,693 for contributions and \$1,911,163,838 for all other reasons. In the deductions for contributions, chiefly to charitable organizations, the largest amount was taken by the taxpayers in the lowest bracket. Those with incomes under \$5,000 wrote off \$120,000,000 for this reason, while persons having incomes of from \$200,000 to \$500,000 deducted only \$5,041,525 and those with incomes of from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 deducted \$6,120,537.—State Journal.

WALKER PLANS A 'RAZZING'

Nice, France.—A list of famous people, including one president-elect, a former presidential candidate, and some of those who have shown in the spotlight of New York politics during the last ten years, are going to be more or less gently "razzed" in the memoirs on which former Mayor James J. Walker will start work Christmas day.

Franklin D. Roosevelt, Al Smith, Samuel Seabury and John F. Curry will be among those written about in the book of memories. Besides, there will be many other world famous persons Walker met during his stay in city hall. Too, there will be letters to King George, Queen Marie of Rumania and the king of Siam. Frank Scully, Walker's literary assistant and American newspaper man, will collaborate with Walker.

Betty Compton, American actress and a friend of Walker, also is planning to write her memoirs with the assistance of Scully. She says she will start soon on her work and that she probably will devote some space to Seabury and the part she played in the Seabury investigation.

MAYOR SIGNS THE BUDGET

New York.—Acting Mayor McKee signed the \$557,141,222.73 budget for 1933 which the municipal assembly passed over his veto earlier this week. He signed the document in bed at home, where he is recovering from a severe cold. The mayor vetoed the budget originally because he considered as "piecemeal" a reduction of \$855,000 which it embodied. After its passage over the veto, however, its enactment was required by Dec. 25. Charles L. Kohler, director of the budget, said a 40 million dollar reduction pledged to the bankers would be made later. Half this cut is to be made in payrolls and the rest from other items.

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