

CHRISTMAS LEGENDS

By Elizabeth Palmer

There is no holiday in the whole year around which so many traditions and legends cluster as Christmas. But, while Christmas, St. Nicholas, Santa Claus, are happily discussed for weeks by every child in Christendom, and while every family is anticipating the "Christmas tree, the hanging of stockings, decorations or holly and greenery, putting a candle in the window and burning a Yule log, few children know the origin of these customs.

The smallest child knows that Christmas is celebrated as the birthday of Christ. Yet there is no historical record that December 25 was the actual date of the birth of Christ. Historians and astronomers agree that it was about the time of the winter solstice, when the days were the longest in the year—near December 21. The early Christmas celebrations were not confined to one day. There was rejoicing from December 16 to January 6. The latter date is now known as Twelfth-night.

It was not until the reign of the Christian emperor, Constantine, in the fourth century, that the observance of Christmas became an established custom, since the early Christians considered the observance of birthdays a pagan custom. The exchange of Christmas gifts has come gradually, a beautiful, unselfish custom in commemoration of the greatest gift of all time—the world—the Christ Child. The giving of gifts also has a religious significance grounded on the act of the Persian Magi in laying gold, frankincense and myrrh before the Babe in the manger.

A Christmas tree as part of the holiday observance originated at the time of the conversion of the German tribes, when St. Boniface came, one Christmas Day about 1,000 years ago, upon a pagan group gathered under the great "Thunder Oak," about to sacrifice a little boy to their god, Thor. All eyes were fixed upon a priest in white robes who held a great hammer poised over the head of the child. When it was about to fall, St. Boniface strode up to the priest, stayed his hand, and cried out to the people to cease their false worship. He told them the story of the birth of the Child at Bethlehem, and telling a small fir tree, gave it to them, saying: "Take this for your Christmas tree, and each year, when the feast day arrives, set it up in your homes and with joy and song celebrate the birthday of Christ."

The tree at first was not used as a gift-bearer, but was purely symbolic—the tree itself of Christ's grandeur and majesty, and the green of His immortality.

The custom of placing lights on the tree is generally attributed to Martin Luther, who, on walking home one Christmas Eve, was filled with awe at the beauty of the stars. Going home he tried to describe to his wife by placing some lighted candles in the branches of the Christmas tree, saying: "This is like the Christmas sky."

St. Nicholas of Armenia was a miser, who hoarded gold and hoards, he came to Bethlehem dressed as a beggar, that he might avoid paying the toll exacted by the officers of Caesar. As he had lost his foliage, it was an immortal thing and was a symbol of everlasting life.

Wonderful powers and properties were attributed to the mistletoe, and when paganism passed, the early Christians clung to many of the pagan ideas about the plant. There was good luck in mistletoe, so that Christmas our northern ancestors would hang a branch of mistletoe over the front door as a sign of good luck and welcome. People entering under it exchanged kisses with the host and his family, and in this way kissing and the mistletoe became associated.

The Scandinavians used to kindle great fires in honor of their god, Thor. In some parts of old England, bringing in the Yule log was the principal ceremony of Christmas Eve.

The custom was for the serfs to bring in a load of wood with them when they came for the Christmas feast, which was to last as long as it took to "burn away a wet wheel"—a section of green wood. Naturally the "wet wheel" would not be a thin slice, but a log. In later times the ceremony was attached to the bringing in of the log. It was drawn into the hall by the serfs and each member of the family in turn, sitting down on the log, sang a Yule song and drank a glass of ale. The log was then cast into the fire with prayers for the safety of the house and the happiness of its inmates until next Yuletide. Part of the Yule log was preserved to light the log of next year.

The Yule log was nearly always an ash log, because a legend avers that it was before an ash fire that the Holy Babe was first washed and dressed by His mother.

Still another legend is responsible for the custom of placing a thick, lighted candle in the window Christmas Eve, which is supposed to be lighted at dusk and to remain through the night.

"On every Christmas Eve the little Christ-Child wanders all over the world, bearing on His shoulders a bundle of evergreens. Through city streets and country roads, up and down hills, to the proudest castle and lowliest hovel, through cold and storm and sleet and ice, the Holy Child travels to be welcomed or rejected at the door at which He pleads for succor. Those who would welcome Him and long for His coming, set a lighted candle in the window to guide Him on His way."

Father of 150 Foxes
Shown at Winter Fair
Toronto.—One hundred and forty-three black and silver foxes, valued at more than \$250,000, or more than \$1,700 apiece, were shown at the Royal Winter Fair here, travelling from Prince Edward Island in an express car. One of the animals, a strapping four-year-old stud, which has sired 150 pups in his life time, is valued alone at \$5,000.

British Royalty at Abyssinian Coronation



Duke of Gloucester as he appeared at recent coronation of Ras Tafari at Addis Ababa, with his apparent to Abyssinian throne (left) and Earl of Athlone (right) in procession to throne.

Festive Dishes For Holidays

When December appears on the calendar, everyone thinks of something good to eat. Winter's invigorating air produces hearty appetites. The spirit of hospitality which always is stimulated by the approach of the winter holidays, gives every woman the desire to entertain her friends.

New recipes are born and cherished every day in Canadian households. It is this adventuring with food combinations that makes for progress in cooking. Without a doubt, in a fixed state, no variety would be found in meals.

What are some of the recently born dishes? Well, here are a few creations that have been tried with much success:

Cranberry Pudding
1/2 cup fat, 1 cup sugar, 2/3 cup milk, 1/2 cup cranberries, 2 eggs, 3/4 cups flour, 4 tps. baking powder, 1/2 tps. salt. Cream fat, add sugar and sift the rest of the dry ingredients with the flour. Beat eggs and add to first mixture. Add the dry ingredients alternately with the milk. Stir in berries. Pour in buttered molds, cover and steam three hours for a large mold and one hour for small ones.

Nut Bread
2 1/2 cups flour, 4 tps. baking powder, 1 tsp. salt, 1 cup sugar, 1/2 cups milk, 2 eggs, 1 cup nut meats, 4 tps. flour, 2 1/2 cups water, 1/2 cup oil, 1/2 cup raisins, 1/2 cup currants, 1/2 cup cranberries, 1/2 cup nuts, 1/2 cup walnuts, 1/2 cup almonds, 1/2 cup pecans, 1/2 cup hazelnuts, 1/2 cup cashews, 1/2 cup pineapples, 1/2 cup cherries, 1/2 cup apricots, 1/2 cup plums, 1/2 cup peaches, 1/2 cup apples, 1/2 cup oranges, 1/2 cup lemons, 1/2 cup limes, 1/2 cup grapefruit, 1/2 cup kiwi fruit, 1/2 cup mango, 1/2 cup papaya, 1/2 cup guava, 1/2 cup passion fruit, 1/2 cup dragon fruit, 1/2 cup jackfruit, 1/2 cup rambutan, 1/2 cup lychee, 1/2 cup longan, 1/2 cup durian, 1/2 cup jackfruit, 1/2 cup rambutan, 1/2 cup lychee, 1/2 cup longan, 1/2 cup durian.

Baked Oysters
Beat 1 egg, and add one cup oysters and their liquid, 2/3 cup cracker crumbs, 1/2 teaspoon salt and a little pepper. Butter a pie plate and turn mixture into this. Sprinkle with 1/2 cup cracker crumbs, dot with cranberry sauce. Bake in oven at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Serve hot with cranberry sauce. Celery and olives also make a pleasing accompaniment for this festive dish.

Stuffed Fruits
Use dried prunes, apricots, figs, or dates. Steam 15 minutes. Make an incision in each piece of fruit with a sharp-pointed paring knife. Stuff with fondant and cover with a nut meat. Roll in sugar. If not to be eaten immediately wrap in oiled paper and pack in tin. The fruits improve in flavor if allowed to stand a few weeks. Pineapple fondant is fine to use in stuffing these fruits.

Pineapple Fondant
2 cups sugar, 3/4 cup water, 4 lbs. crushed pineapple. Put sugar and water in pan and stir until dissolved. Cook to 150 degrees, without stirring, keeping sides of pan washed down with a soft cloth moistened in cool water and tied over the tin of a silver fork. Add crushed pineapple, drained from the syrup and cook to 240 deg. F., which is just beyond the soft ball stage. Turn on a platter wet with cold water. When cool, work with a spatula or knife. Use this fondant as the centers for bonbons, roll the pieces in nuts or stuff in dried fruits. It is almost essential to employ a candy thermometer in making fondants successfully.

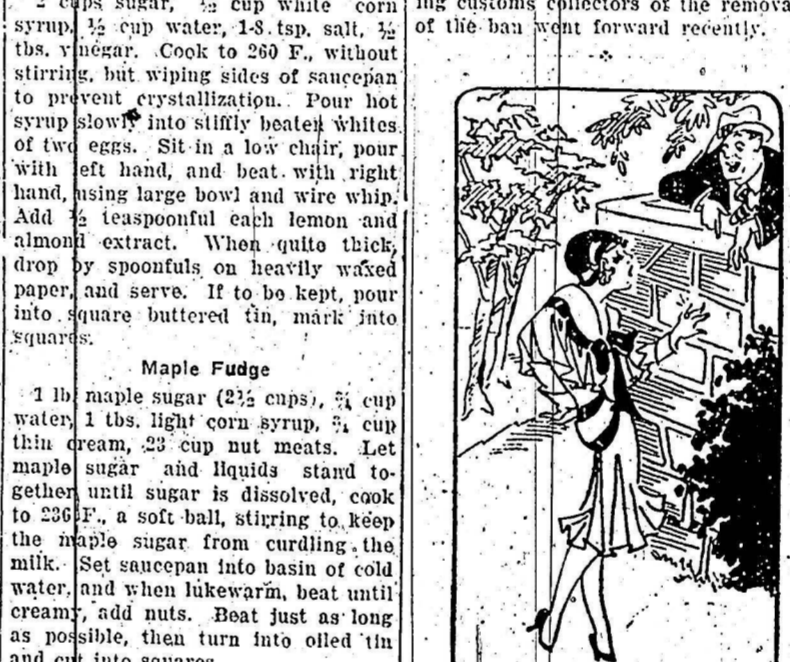
Apple sherbet or mint ice served in red apple shells, from which the pulp has been removed, is a dessert for those who must resist the temptation of pies and puddings.

Ban on Love Birds and Parrots Lifted

Ottawa.—Love birds may now be imported into Canada. So also may parrots, parakeets, cockatoos, macaws, lorries and lorikeets. The ban placed on their importation some months ago has been removed.

Love birds, as might be expected from their name, sometimes make people sick. The same is the case with parrots and the other pets mentioned above. They are subject to a disease termed psittacosis and they are likely to give it to humans. The mortality is very high among humans who contract it.

Some time ago a number of cases were reported from Europe, officials of the Agricultural Department became alarmed and put a ban on birds' subject to such an ailment. Since that, however, the disease seems to have disappeared. A circular informing customs collectors of the removal of the ban went forward recently.



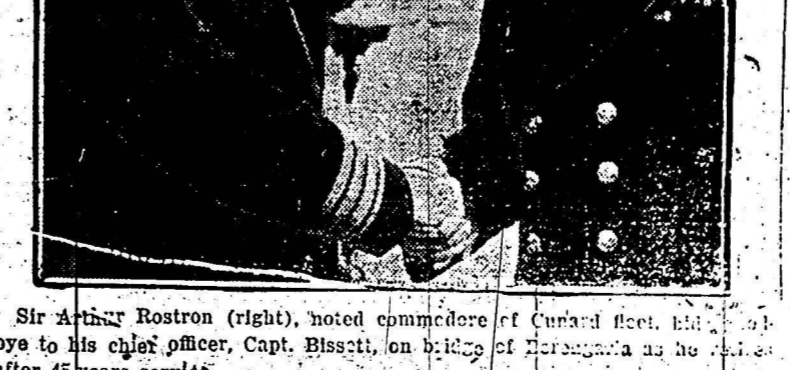
A sprouting sprout, will usually catch your sweetie's eye.

British Woman Flier Reaches Osaka, Japan
Osaka, Japan.—Hon. Mrs. Victor Bruce, British motorist and aviator, arrived here on Nov. 21st after a lone flight from London, which she left September 25.

She was welcomed by Japanese and British residents and was given a banquet. Newspapers here lauded her dogged flight across two continents to Japan, commenting that she was the first woman to attempt the dangerous journey.

Flying Ships Are Big Hope of Aviation
Toronto.—The future of aviation does not lie in lighter-than-air craft, Captain Stafford Lusk told members of the Canadian Progress Club at their recent luncheon here. Rather, he said, it lies in ships like the great German plane, the DO-X.

Captain Lusk endeavored to impress the safety of flying. Aviation, he declared, is past the day of experimentation.



Commodore Says "Goodbye"
Sir Arthur Rostron (right), noted commodore of Cunard fleet, bids adieu to his chief officer, Capt. Bissett, on bridge of Mariposa as he departs after 45-years service.

Guidance of Child Urged by Experts

Old-Time Conformity to Adult Standards No Longer Sought

Washington.—The White House conference on child health and protection convened here recently to consider the case of the modern baby, born and reared in a period greatly dissimilar to that of the "decade of don'ts."

The 1930 child, in the opinion of these experts, must be taught to think and act independently in a changing era of speed, small apartments and traffic signals.

"Our attitude to-day is to remove the 'don'ts,'" explained Dr. Mary Dalton Davis, specialist in nursery, primary and kindergarten education at the United States Office of Education.

"Instead of placing attention on undesirable things, we place it in the constructive realm of using fully the elementary drive to do.

"A decade ago we tried to make the child conform to adult standard, but the whole idea at present is to get a line on the child's attitude and then guide it.

"We must educate him positively through celebrating his successes. If brief, if a two-year-old learns to call his shoals well in transferring food from plate to palate, the family cheer-section must get into action promptly.

A few days of cheering may develop and extreme interest in the accuracy of manners."

Lifts of a baby generation ago, Dr. Dalton said, was a simple thing compared to the complex business of being a child to-day.

"They didn't have to dodge speed nor overcome handicaps of congestion. There were no automobiles or elevators. A door-knob was the most intricate mechanism that the babies of 1900 had to master."

"The thousands of delegates convened at the conference here, summoned by President Hoover to consider how the nation can better its task of building citizenship from the ranks of its 45,000,000 children, including 10,000,000 defectives."

Storing Apples For Winter Use
Only Sound Specimens Should Be Utilized for this Purpose.

Apples to be kept for use during the winter months should be carefully selected for that purpose. Early maturing sorts like Wealthy and Gravenstein can hardly be kept past Christmas, so that later keeping varieties, like McIntosh, Northern Spy, Russet and Baldwin, should be selected for this purpose.

All bruised fruit, or scabby fruit, should be discarded and only perfect fruit should be stored. If these are wrapped in oiled tissue or in ordinary tissue paper, keeping is greatly facilitated. Storing in bushel boxes is preferable to large containers and these should be kept in a cellar where the temperature does not go much above 40 deg. F., and does not fall below freezing. The average cement cellar, with a heating plant, is not satisfactory for apple storage. The best type of cellar is an ordinary dirt floor cellar without any artificial heat. In such a cellar, both temperature and moisture conditions are generally satisfactory for good keeping. In the event of a cement cellar being the only available place, it would be wise to cover the floor with several inches of sawdust, which should be kept dampened down to provide the necessary humidity. Such a procedure, accompanied by wrapping and a temperature of from 40 to 45 deg. F., will result in satisfactory storage conditions.—Issued by M. B. Davis, Centre Experimental Farm, Ottawa.

Sunday School Lesson

December 14. Lesson XI—Saul of Tarsus (How a Pharisee Became a Christian)—Acts 22: 3-15. Golden Text—"I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ.—Philippians 3: 8.

ANALYSIS
I. THE PERSECUTOR, vs. 3-5.
II. THE CONVERT, vs. 6-15.

INTRODUCTION—There are three accounts given in Acts of the conversion of Saul, in two of which he himself is the speaker, 9: 1-19; 22: 1-21; 26: 1-20. In several passages in his epistles he makes mention of his great experience, the crisis and turning point of his life. Gal. 1: 15, 16; 1 Cor. 15: 8-10; 1 Tim. 1: 13-16; 2 Tim. 1: 3-6.

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Tornado Ravaged Village Rebuilds

24 Were Killed In Oklahoma Suburb, and Over 100 Injured

Oklahoma City.—Residents of the storm-ravaged village of Bethany near here have started to rebuild their crushed homes and bury their dead.

For the first time since a cyclone struck the village at noon Nov. 29, killing 24, injuring more than 100 and wrecking 100 houses and business establishments, Bethany was started with a settlement of 2,500 inhabitants. Bethany was started with almost every available building material in the state, including...

Argentina
Although Argentina has only 10 per cent of South America's area and 16 per cent of its population, it has 52 per cent of the automobiles, 42 per cent of the railway mileage (all per cent of it British owned and operated) 50 per cent of the foreign trade, 60 per cent of the postal exchange, the transportation of mail per capita almost the highest in the world, 55 per cent of the newspaper is equipped in Argentina, and it has 72 per cent of the gold.

We predict that business will be normal when everything makes a start. The dollar should ten dollars.