

# Candles Glean, Bells Ring, St. Nick Arrives — It's Merry Christmas!

Christmas came but once a year — and into that magic "once" are packed years and years of well-loved traditions. Candles gleam brightly, bells ring merrily, glad carols fill the air.

Up goes the tree and on go the ornaments and lights. In many a home and in many other places, too, both in and out of doors. Evergreen branches, holly and mistletoe decorate the season. Children eagerly await Santa Claus, his sleigh and his reindeer, stockings are hung and greetings and gifts, gaily wrapped, spread the spirit of Christmas. How fast it is to see the bellows of the season, the glow of the candles, the joy of the children, the peace of the season, the legends and customs of the holiday season, however, come from scores of sources and many ancient festivals have contributed their part to Christmas as a time of merrymaking.

### Gifts

Gifts of all Christmas gifts were sold. Franciscans and monks the wise men's gifts to the infant Jesus. Gift giving at the season of the year now celebrated as Christmas can also be traced back to pre-Christian times. The ancient Romans exchanged gifts during their Saturnalia, a festival honoring Saturn, the pagan god of agriculture. Hanging gifts on trees figured in Druid tree worship in early Britain.

### Helping Poor

Principles of Christianity are reflected in Christmas giving to the poor and unfortunate. An old legend says that on Christmas Eve the Christ Child roams the earth, dressed as a beggar. In search of food and shelter. People believed that any kindness shown a beggar expressed a love for Jesus.

### For Feasting

Good food is traditional at Christmas, and the special treats provided for the season include almost everything, ranging from baked carp in Austria to roast pig in Hawaii. In France it's traditional to serve a Christmas supper after midnight mass, but the main dish varies according to the section of the country — roan goose in Alsace, turkey in Burgundy, pheasant and sausages in England. A month-wasting array of traditional dishes for Christmas feasting, among them plum pudding, as the pudding is being prepared. It's customary for each member of the family to eat it, making a wish for the New Year. In Germany, the people bake long cakes for Christmas. The cakes are meant to symbolize the Christ Child wrapped in swaddling clothes.

### Cranberries were Indians' Medicine

Cranberries are as traditional as apple pie. Known to the Indians as "bibi" or "bibi berry," cranberries were powdered into a paste called pemican, which was used as poultice on wounds. Noting the berries to be the favorite food of cranes, the Pilgrims called them cranberries. In the American tradition, this was eventually changed to cranberries.

Cranes, of course, are unwelcome in cranberry bogs — but their cries are encouraged. Bogs are often lined with birdhouses — homes for swallows, which eat destructive lice. Along with the birds, the bees play a welcome role in cranberry production. The pollen is too heavy to be carried by the wind so bees are necessary to

### Card tradition

The Christmas card is a joint-venture among our cherished holiday traditions. You can get an argument as to who sent the first card. Some hold that it was Joseph Cumail, a London artist, whose lithographed, hand-colored card was sent to friends in 1846.



was welcome, or help to light Him on his way.

### Singing Carols

Caroling at Christmas may be a carryover from the Roman songs of the Saturnalia, or so some researchers believe. Early Christmas songs were often carols. The simple, folksy carols best liked today didn't gain widespread popularity until the 14th and 15th centuries.

### Decorating Trees

In ancient feasts of the winter equinox, trees were adorned with tinsel. Like many pagan customs, the evergreen tree became associated with Christmas observances, and legends link it to the birth of Christ. One story says that on Christmas Eve all the trees of the forest bloomed and bore fruit.

### Lighting Candles

Lighting at Christmas symbolizes the coming of Christ, as the light of the world. Since earlier times, men have used candles for light. In the past, candles were used for light in churches, schools, and homes. In the past, candles were used for light in churches, schools, and homes.

### Yule Greens

Evergreens at Christmas are an emblem of life eternal. An old legend says that the greenness of evergreens in winter was a promise of the earth for that spring would come again.

## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

On this wonderful holiday of Peace and Joy we wish our heartfelt greetings, and wishes for your Christmas to be merry and bright.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF  
**THOMPSON FUELS LTD.**



## THE FAMILY STORE

As He brought us Peace, may this holiday bring hope for all mankind. We wish you a Christmas of serene joy.

## "PAT AND BILL"

## WATSON'S RESTAURANT

## Back to fifth century Caroling old Christmas custom

Christmas carolling is almost as old as Christmas itself — though not in the form we know it.

An early historian wrote that in the second century the bishop of Rome urged the people to sing Christmas hymns to go back to the 4th century, when most of them were written in Latin.

St. Francis of Assisi is regarded as the father of carolling in the West. He is said to have written a Nativity scene in 1223. St. Francis placed a creche (miniature Nativity scene) in a hermitage in Greccio, Italy.

After this many churches began displaying a Nativity scene at Christmas, and soon the people began acting out the Christmas story. The actors composed carols to sing with their Nativity plays and after the plays, they would stroll down the street, singing. In that way, street carolling was born.

No one knows who wrote "The First Noel." It first appeared in

emford, Austria, composed by "Silent Night" or "Stille Nacht" on Christmas Eve, 1818. Franz Gruber, the local schoolmaster and organist, composed the music the same day and the hymn was sung for the first time at Michaelmas that night.

Charles Wesley, brother of John Wesley, wrote "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" in 1739, Phillips Brooks, a noted Boston clergyman wrote "O Little Town of Bethlehem" in 1858 after visiting Bethlehem.

Though not a carol, Handel's noble "Messiah" is a Christmas tradition. It first was performed in Dublin in 1742. "Joy to the World," written in the early 18th Century by Isaac Watts, was set to the music of a segment of the "Messiah." "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night," written in 1703 by William Child, was set to music taken from "The First Noel." It first appeared in

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## Shrine of the Three Kings

On that first Christmas, a special Star shone bright over the Mother and Child. May the Christmas star of peace, joy and happiness shine bright over you and yours for Christmas and all through the year.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF  
**DOMINION HOTEL**

**Outdoor shrubs are holiday decoration**

Many trees and shrubs, perhaps some in your yard, provide attractive foliage suitable for holiday decorations. Some can be brought in the home for trim, others can be decorated for outside.

Foliage plants include Magnolia, pine, bamboo, Chinese arcythone, photostorm, and aucuba gold dust.

Popular shrubs include Carolina Holly, Snowberry, varietals of roses, such as Rose Multiflora, also many assortments of Viburnums and Euonymus.

American holly is best known, but there are others, such as Yucca, Pedicularis holly, Chinese holly and English holly.

Try decorating any one of these that you have. In your yard, bring some in your house, perhaps an assortment of branches, or brighten up your yard with lights on shrubs.



## CHRISTMAS GREETINGS

As the Three Wise Men brought gifts to the Manger, so may this holiday season bring to you peace and joy.

**DR. CEDRIC DEY AND STAFF**



## Rendezvous Beauty Salon

The Salon Will Be Closed Tuesday, Dec. 26 and Tuesday, Jan. 2.