



May this Christmas be full of joy and contentment for you. We are deeply grateful for the attention you have given us this past year, and hope our pleasant relations will not be interrupted in 1938.

W. C. ARNOTT
MEN'S AND BOYS' FURNISHINGS
31 First Avenue Phone 740 Schumacher



May the spirit of Christmas stay with you throughout the Coming Year, and guide you to greater health, wealth and contentment than you have ever known. That is our Christmas Wish.

PATENT'S BAKERY
Wilson Avenue Timmins



We thank you for your patronage during the past year, and wish for you and yours a full measure of the Season's choicest delights.

SMITH AND ELSTON LIMITED
PLUMBING AND HEATING
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CHRISTMAS CHEER

To you we send a Cheery Holiday Greeting and express the hope that our paths will meet often in 1938.

SULLIVAN & NEWTON
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How Old Are the Old Christmas Customs

Some Little Known Facts About Christmas

(By Douglas Peel)
The spell of Christmas has exercised a mystic influence on humanity all down the ages. There is no authentic record of the day nor the month of the birth of Christ, but at various times it has been attributed to every month in the calendar.

It was first celebrated on December 25th at Rome about the middle of the fourth century. Previously January 6th (the baptismal date) was the day on which both feasts were celebrated.

Even to-day the Armenian Church knows nothing of December 25th. They still follow the old way and celebrate the Nativity and the Epiphany together on January 6th.

The Feast of the Epiphany—commemorating the visit of the Three Wise Men of the East to the Christ Child—can be traced back to the second century, and even before that a pagan ritual had always been observed on that day.

From Rome Christmas has gradually spread throughout the West, and came to England with St. Augustine, who, on Christmas Day in the year 598, baptized more than 10,000 English converts.

Noel, another name for Christmas, which we have borrowed from the French, although for centuries used in connection with the birth of Christ, was previously used to celebrate another birthday—that of the unconquered sun, who, at the winter solstice, December 25th, reached the point of his most northerly journey, and then began his upward climb in the heavens with renewed vigor. This was naturally a cause for great rejoicing among primitive peoples who depended entirely upon the moods of nature for a good or poor living.

The explanation adopted by most scholars for the pagan and the Christian festivals being on the same day is that the founders of the Christian Church, fearing to change too drastically the habits of the people whose allegiance they wished to secure, refrained from abolishing the old pagan feasts, but adapted them to the Christmas calendar.

Yule is the Danish name for Christmas. Its origin is lost in antiquity, but in pagan times it represented a two-month tide, covering the second half of November to the first half of January. The old pagan customs which later melted into the Christian festivities were magical rites invoking prosperity from the gods for the coming year.

New Year's Day is thus a far older feast than Christmas, and in pagan times three days at least were given up to riotous life, banqueting and license. Christmas was not only the warm jovial festival it is to-day. To the early Christians their religion was essentially one of renunciation.

To St. Francis
It is to St. Francis of Assisi, known to posterity as the patron saint of animals, that we owe the humanizing of Christmas. This Italian monk of the thirteenth century, while not underestimating the divine side of the Nativity, was the first to realize the full poetry of the Christmas. The son of a silk merchant, his appeal was made chiefly to the traders and workmen of the cities, and the growing influence of him and his followers, the Franciscans, was the means of bringing a warm human aspect of Christianity home to the people. To St. Francis the Divine Child was the "Little Brother" of all mankind.

When the common people once grasped the story of Christmas, it immediately became imbued with the idea of love and brotherhood, and gradually, through many phases Christmas became the homely festival it is to-day.

Carols as we know them were not introduced into England until the fifteenth century. Strange to relate, the word "carol" has a secular and even pagan meaning. In twelfth century France, it was used to describe singing joined with dancing and had no connection whatever with religion.

Whether Christmas carols were ever danced to in England is doubtful, but many of them have a lilt and glee which could easily be associated with dancing. In Germany, however, old records tell us that there was choral dancing at Christmas round the cradle of the Christ Child.

From Folk Dances
Many carols from their structure could easily be derived from the choral dances of the farm folk, the most notable indication of this being their refrain, a survival of the common outcry of the dancers as they leaped around.

Christmas Eve is not observed in England as it is in other European countries, where it is as important—if not more so—than the day itself. It was always at midnight on Christmas Eve that the celebrated Christmas Mass took place, from which Christmas derives its name.

According to old legends, Christmas Eve is charged with the supernatural. In some parts of Europe the idea still exists that on that one night animals gain the power of speech, and it is fatal to hear the beasts talk. Another belief is that at midnight all cattle rise in their stalls or kneel and adore the new-born King.

While it is quite probable that the traditional association of the ox and ass with the Nativity is partly responsible for the idea, the legend of talking animals derives from pagan times.

The Yule Log in ancient times, and even until the middle ages, had mystic properties, and on Christmas Eve was brought in and lighted with much ceremony. It bode ill to the house if it went out before the New Year was ushered in.

The children's symbol, the Christmas tree, is a comparatively recent innova-

tion. It is of German origin and even there was not known until the nineteenth century. It is not a luxury for the well-to-do but the very pivot of the festival for rich and poor alike. It is kept a closely guarded secret until Christmas Eve, when it is unveiled in the presence of the whole family assembled for the purpose. It is always a thing of beauty, sparkling with coloured light and glittering with fruits and ornaments.

We owe its popularity in England to Queen Victoria and her consort, Prince Albert, who had one for their own Christmas celebrations in 1840. It was adopted unanimously by the English nation and from that year became completely naturalized.

Decorating the house with holly, laurel and mistletoe has again a distinctly pagan origin, and was frowned upon by the priests in early times, but the old custom stuck and has done to this day.

In ancient times the peasants decorated their houses with evergreens to give shelter to the "little folk" or fairies during the worst of the winter, being sure that in return for such shelter from the cold leafless woods, they would bless the houses in which they had stayed.

The significance of "kissing under the mistletoe" is completely lost in the mists of obscurity, but mistletoe has always been associated with Christmas ritual. The plant was called by the Druids "all healer" and was believed to be a remedy for poison. According to one old village custom, the young men, each time they kissed a girl, plucked a berry from "the golden bough" and when the berries were gone, the privilege ceased.

Is There a Santa? Of Course There Is!

Famous New Yorker Made Answer to a Boy Friend

This is how the late Jacob A. Riis, of New York, explained it to a little friend:—

"No Santa Claus? Yes, my little man, there is a Santa Claus, thank God! The world would indeed be poor without one. It is true that he does not always wear a white beard and drive a reindeer team—not always, you know—but what does it matter. He is Santa Claus with the big, loving, Christmas heart, for all that; Santa Claus with the kind thoughts for everyone that make children and grown-up people beam with happiness all day long.

"And shall I tell you a secret which I did not learn at the post office, but it is true all the same—of how you can always be sure your letters go to him straight by the chimney route? It is this: Send along with them a friendly thought for the boy you don't like; for Jack who punched you, or Jim who was mean to you. The meaner he was the harder do you resolve to make it up; not to bear him a grudge. That is the stamp of the letter to Santa. Nobody can stop it, not even a cross-draught in the chimney, when it has that on.

"Because—don't you know—Santa Claus is the spirit of Christmas; and ever and ever so many years ago when the dear little Baby was born after whom we call Christmas, and was cradled in the manger out in the stable because there was not room in the inn, that Spirit came into the world to soften the hearts of men and make them love one another. Therefore, that is the mark of the Spirit of this day. Don't let anybody or anything rub it out. Then the rest doesn't matter. Let them tear Santa's white beard off at the Sunday School festival and growl in his bearskin coat. These are only his disguises. The steps of the real Santa Claus you can trace all through the world as you have done here with me, and when you stand in the last of his tracks you will find the blessed Babe of Bethlehem smiling a welcome to you. For then you will be home."

Christmas Eve at Sea

(By John Manfield)
A wind is rustling "south and soft,"
Cooling a quiet country tune,
The calm sea sighs, and far aloft
The sails are ghostly in the moon.

Unquiet ripples lisp and purr,
A block there pipes and chirps 't the
heave,
The wheel-ropes jar, the reef-pints stir
Faintly—and it is Christmas Eve.

The hushed sea seems to hold her
breath,
And o'er the giddy, swaying spars,
Silent and excellent as Death,
The dim blue skies are bright with
stars.

Dear God—they shone in Palestine
Like this, and yon pale moon serene
Looked down among the lowing kine,
On Mary and the Nazarine.

The angels called from deep to deep,
The burning heavens felt the thrill,
Startling the flocks of silly sheep
And lonely shepherds on the hill.

To-night beneath the dripping bows
Where flashing bubbles burst and
throng,
The bow-wash murmurs and sighs and
soughs
A message from the angels' sing.

The moon goes nodding down the west,
The drowsy helmsman strikes the
bell;
Rex Judaeorum natus est.
I charge you, brothers, sing Nowell,
Nowell,
Rex Judaeorum natus est.



GREETINGS

To all our many friends—young and old alike—we Wish the Season's Greetings, with the hope that our friendships increase throughout the Coming Year.

SWIFT CANADIAN COMPANY, LTD.

Phones 400 and 401 Timmins



Christmas Greetings

We offer Greetings and Good Wishes to all our friends in The Porcupine District. We sincerely hope that there are many pleasant surprises in store for you in 1938.

FRANK BYCK
COAL AND FUEL MERCHANT

Spruce Street South Timmins



May the joy of successful achievement be yours for this Merry Christmas and throughout the many months of the New Year.

HILL-CLARK-FRANCIS LIMITED

86 Pine Street South Phone 126 Timmins



May you find among your presents on Christmas morning the priceless gifts of Health, Happiness and Contentment. We take this opportunity to thank our friends and customers for a Prosperous Year.

MOISLEY & BALL
DRUGGISTS AND PHARMACISTS

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