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VOLUME

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# Compton's Encyclopedia

and Fact-Index

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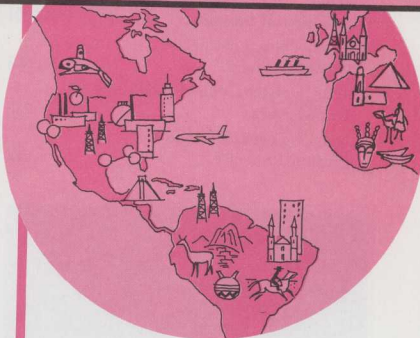
THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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*"Let knowledge grow from more to more and thus be human life enriched"*

## HERE AND THERE IN VOLUME 6

AT ODD TIMES when you are just looking for "something interesting to read," without any special plan in mind, this list will help you. With this as a guide, you may visit faraway countries, watch people at their work and play, meet famous persons of ancient and modern times, review history's most brilliant incidents, explore the marvels of nature and science, play games—in short, find whatever suits your fancy of the moment. This list is not intended to serve as a table of contents, an index, or a study guide. For these purposes consult the Fact-Index and the Reference-Outlines.



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Chinch bugs are both long-winged (right) and short-winged (left). They are black with white markings.

**CHINCH BUG.** A destructive pest in North America is the chinch bug. This tiny insect is about one sixteenth of an inch long. It attacks plants of the grass family, particularly barley, wheat, rye, oats, and corn. The adult bugs hibernate in the winter

in grass clumps. In the spring they fly to fields of small grain. The female lays several hundred eggs in the leaf sheaths or in the ground nearby. In one or two weeks tiny red-colored nymphs (young bugs) hatch. Like the older bugs, they feed by sucking the juices from the plants. They mature in 40 to 50 days, shedding their skins five times.

As the small grains ripen and are cut, the chinch bugs migrate to fields of corn and sorghum which are still green. They may crawl or fly. After the migration a second generation is produced, and, in the South, a third generation.

The chinch bug can be controlled by growing immune crops, such as legumes, or resistant varieties of grains. Barriers doused with insecticide may be placed along the edges of fields when the bugs migrate by crawling. Direct spraying and dusting of the bugs are other methods of control. The scientific name of the insect is *Blissus leucopterus*.

**CHINCHILLA.** A rodent native to South America, the chinchilla furnishes one of the most expensive and beautiful furs used for fashionable garments. The little animal is 12 to 14 inches long, exclusive of the bushy tail. Its bluish-gray fur is silky and extremely fine. It is thicker than that of any other mammal. As many as 60 hairs grow from a single follicle (hair root).

In their native habitat, the Andes range in Chile, Peru, and Bolivia, chinchillas live in rocky burrows at altitudes above 8,000 feet. They sleep most of the day. At night they come out to feed on dry grass, berries, and tree bark. Stiff, long whiskers help them feel their way in the dark.

#### THE CHINCHILLA AND THE CHIPMUNK

The blue-gray fur of the chinchilla (left) is denser than that of any other mammal. The little animal is a rodent. The eastern



The female begins to bear young at the age of nine to ten months. The species most often grown on fur farms, *Chinchilla laniger*, bears one to seven young in 111 days. There are usually two litters a year. The young are born with fur and teeth. The chinchilla has a life-span of from eight to ten years.

The widespread demand for chinchilla fur nearly led to the animal's extinction in the early 1900's. Conservation laws now protect the wild chinchilla. Commercial breeding in the United States began with 11 animals brought to California in 1923. Chinchilla ranches today are scattered through most states. Chinchillas belong to the family *Chinchillidae*. They are in the order *Rodentia* (gnawers).

#### THESE ARTICLES ARE IN THE FACT-INDEX

Chinchow, People's	Chinkiang, People's
Republic of China	Republic of China
Chindwin River	Chino, Calif.
Chiné	Chinook
Chinese forget-me-not	Chinquapin
Chinese lantern plant	Chins
Chinese primrose	Chinwangtao, People's
Ching, Cyrus S(tuart)	Republic of China
Chingachgook	Chioggia, Italy

**CHIPMUNK.** A lively, chattering little animal, the chipmunk looks like its cousin the squirrel. Chipmunks are smaller, though, and have striped backs. The rusty-brown eastern chipmunk has five dark-brown and two light stripes. The gray western chipmunk has five dark and four light stripes. The animals are from 8 to 11 inches in length.

The chipmunk's home is a burrow dug under rocks or tree roots or in old logs. It contains storerooms and a leaf-lined nest. By late spring, some 30 days after mating, the female bears an average of four or five young. The young do not leave the nest until they are a month to six weeks old. Chipmunks eat nuts, seeds, wild fruits, and berries. They have inner cheek pouches which they stuff with food. In the autumn they lay in supplies for the winter.

Chipmunks belong to the squirrel family (*Sciuridae*) of rodents. They are sometimes called ground squirrels, but the name belongs more properly to a closely

chipmunk (right) can be identified by a single white stripe on each side. Its call is a cluck or rapid chuck.



related animal. The eastern chipmunk (*Tamias striatus*) ranges from Canada to Georgia and west to the Great Plains. Western chipmunks belong to the genus *Eutamias*.

## THESE ARTICLES ARE IN THE FACT-INDEX

Chippawa, Ont.	Chisholm, Shirley (Anita)
Chippewa Falls, Wis.	Chita, Russia
Chiquito	Chitimacha
Chiricahua	Chittagong, Bangladesh
Chirico, Giorgio di	Chittenden, Thomas
Chirapody	Chivers, Thomas Holley
Chiropractic	Chladni, Ernst Florens
Chisholm, Jesse	Friedrich

**CHLORINE.** In its pure form and in some of its compounds, chlorine is deadly to animals and human beings. In other compounds, notably sodium chloride (NaCl), or common salt, it is harmless and necessary to all animal life. The element presenting these contradictions is a greenish-yellow gas with an acrid, suffocating odor. It is never found free in nature but can be obtained from salt water by *electrolysis* (running an electric current through the solution). This process yields free chlorine and sodium hydroxide (caustic soda). Chlorine gas obtained in this way is compressed to a liquid. In this form it is mixed into the water supply of cities to destroy disease germs. Commercially, large quantities of the element are used in making carbon tetrachloride and in the manufacture of bleaching agents.

In the bleaching process, chlorine interacts with oxygen to reduce dyes and pigments to colorless compounds. Liquefied chlorine may be used, but chlorine compounds (which give up free chlorine) are more commonly used. Bleaching powder, or chloride of lime, is calcium oxychloride,  $\text{CaOCl}_2$ . Dissolved in water, this yields calcium hypochlorite,  $\text{Ca}(\text{OCl})_2$ , also used for bleaching. Chlorine compounds are widely used in the paper and textile industries and in the manufacture of laundry bleaches.

Many other compounds exist. Combined with metals, chlorine forms chlorides (such as sodium chloride), and with metal and oxygen, chlorates. These are used in such diverse industries as the manufacture of fireworks and the extraction of gold from its ores. With hydrogen, chlorine forms the useful compound hydrochloric acid (see Hydrochloric Acid).

Chlorine belongs to the very active group of elements called *halogens*. The name (from Greek *halos*, "salt") is given them because they combine directly with metals to form salts. Also members of the group are fluorine, bromine, and iodine.

## PROPERTIES OF CHLORINE

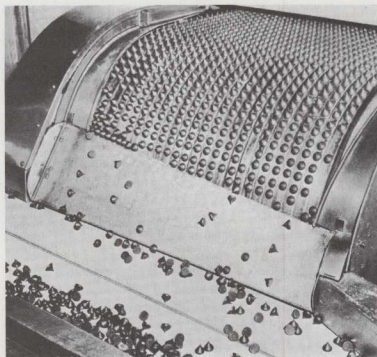
Symbol.....Cl	Density at 32°F.
Atomic Number.....17	... .00321 grams per cc
Atomic Weight...35.453	Boiling Point -30.28°F.
Group in Periodic	Melting Point
Table.....VII A	....-162 to -144°F.

## THESE ARTICLES ARE IN THE FACT-INDEX

Chloris  
Choate, Joseph Hodges  
Choate, Rufus

**CHOCOLATE.** As a food and a flavoring, chocolate is widely popular. People everywhere enjoy chocolate candies, pastries, and drinks. Chocolate is made from the seeds, or "beans," of the tropical cacao tree (see Cacao). The beans grow inside pods both on the trunk and on the branches of the tree. Workers cut the pods from the tree trunks with machetes and from the branches with long-handled knives. The purple or creamy-white beans are shelled from the pod.

By courtesy of the Chocolate Manufacturers Association of the U.S.A.



Pieces of chocolate tumble from the assembly line after automatic processing. The molded bits are ready for packaging.

At this stage the bean has a raw bitter taste. As the first step in the long process of making appetizing chocolate, the beans are piled in bins and allowed to ferment for several days. They then take on a rich brown color and the fragrance of chocolate. After several more days of drying, which prevents spoilage, the beans are bagged for shipment.

When they arrive at the factory, the beans are roasted in large rotating machines. This improves the flavor still more and dries the shells of the beans so that they can be easily removed in the next machine, the "cracker and fanner." Here the beans are cracked, and fans blow away the brittle shells, leaving the *nibs*, or meat. The nibs are the part used for making chocolate products. The shells are saved for use in fertilizer or as feed for cattle.

About 50 percent of the nibs is made up of a fatty substance known as cocoa butter. In the next stage large grinding stones or heavy steel disks crush the nibs, creating frictional heat that melts the butter. The hard parts of the nibs are ground to powder. The result is a smooth, dark-brown liquid known as

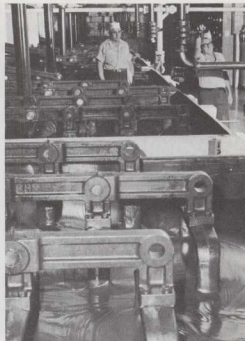




Marc and Evelyn Bernheim—Rapho Guillumette



By courtesy of the Chocolate Manufacturers Association of the U.S.A.



By courtesy of Hershey Foods Corporation

### A LONG ROAD FROM BEANS TO CHOCOLATE

A young native of the Ivory Coast cuts ripe cocoa pods at the family farm. An open cocoa pod (center) reveals seeds from

which chocolate is made. Chocolate is stirred for 72 hours in the conching process.

chocolate liquor. When poured into molds, the liquid hardens into cakes of unsweetened chocolate. Chocolate in this form is bought by housewives for cooking uses.

For cocoa, the liquor is poured into giant hydraulic presses. Under the pressure a large part of the cocoa butter flows out as a yellow liquid. Solid, light-brown cakes are left in the presses. These are ground and sifted, forming cocoa powder.

Eating chocolate is made by adding an extra portion of cocoa butter. For sweet chocolate, finely powdered sugar is added. For milk chocolate a third ingredient, milk, is included. Various flavorings may also be added. These mixtures go through a set of rollers that reduces them to a paste.

Next, more machines with heavy rollers knead the chocolate mass for periods ranging from a few hours to several days. This process, called *conching* because originally the machines were shaped like shells, makes the rather gritty mixture very smooth. Varying the temperature in the machines and the movement of the rollers produces variations in flavor.

Finally the chocolate is *tempered*, or heated to a high temperature. This reduces the size of large fat crystals and gives the chocolate a velvety quality. The chocolate is poured into molds by automatic machinery. It may be molded into small individual bars or into the large ten-pound blocks used by candy manufacturers.

Cocoa butter is sold separately for other purposes. When solid, it is white and pleasant to the taste. Baking firms may use it instead of dairy butter. It is also an ingredient of soaps and complexion creams.

Chocolate was for many centuries enjoyed chiefly as a beverage. Its popularity began in the Americas where the cacao tree grew wild. In the early 1500's

when Hernando Cortez conquered Mexico, the Aztec emperor Montezuma served him a drink called "chocolatl." Cortez brought the beverage back to Spain. With sugar, vanilla, and cinnamon added to sweeten the bitter drink, it became a favorite with the Spanish aristocracy. In the 1600's the drink won popularity among the upper classes in France and England. In 1753 the botanist Carl von Linné gave the cacao tree the botanical name *Theobroma*, meaning "food of the gods."

As better refining methods were developed, the taste of chocolate was improved. The drink was also brought within the means of other classes than the wealthy. In the 1800's the processes for making smooth, tasty eating chocolate were invented. This increased the popularity of chocolate products still more. Today the chocolate industry in the United States is a big one, absorbing more than one fourth of the world production of cacao beans. Other important manufacturing countries are West Germany, the Netherlands, Great Britain, and France.

Chocolate is a highly concentrated food. One pound of sweet milk chocolate contains nearly 2,500 calories, almost twice as many as a pound of beef or a dozen eggs. About half the composition of milk chocolate is carbohydrate and about one third is fat. There is a small amount of *theobromine*, an alkaloid similar to the caffeine found in tea and coffee.

#### THESE ARTICLES ARE IN THE FACT-INDEX

Ch'oe, Namson  
Chobalsan, Mongolian  
People's Republic  
'Choir Invisible'  
Chokeberry

Choke damp  
Cholera  
Cholesterol  
Cholula, Mexico

**CHOPIN** (*shō'pān*), **Frédéric François** (1810-1849). Perhaps the greatest of all composers for the piano was Chopin. Listeners continue to be delighted by the variety and brilliance of his warlike polonaises, his elegant waltzes, his romantic nocturnes, and his ballades and études.

Frédéric Chopin was born at Zelazowa Wola, a village near Warsaw, Poland. His father, Nicholas, was a Frenchman who had lived in Poland for many years. His mother was Polish and of noble birth. Several months after Frédéric's birth the family moved to Warsaw. Here Nicholas was professor of French at the Lyceum, or high school.

The Chopin house was cheerful and often noisy. Frédéric had three sisters, and his father kept a small boarding school for boys. The homelife was cultured as well, for the Chopins' friends were among the intellectuals and aristocrats of Warsaw.

Even as a small child, Chopin loved piano music. He began to take piano lessons when he was six years old. He started to compose music even before he knew how to write down his ideas. At the age of eight he performed in a public charity concert. Chopin's first published musical work, a rondo, appeared when he was 15 years old. When Chopin graduated from the Lyceum, at the age of 17, he was recognized as the leading pianist of Warsaw, and he was also regarded as a talented composer.

Chopin gave two concerts in Vienna when he was 19. These received great praise. He returned to Vienna the next year, and while he was there Poland revolted against its Russian rulers. The uprising failed, and as a result the Russian czar put Warsaw under

harsh military rule. Chopin therefore decided to go to Paris, France.

Except for occasional trips, Chopin spent the rest of his life in Paris. He gave lessons and concerts, and publishers paid well for his compositions. The French loved him for his genius and his charm. Poets, musicians, wealthy Parisians, and Polish exiles were his friends. An important influence was a romantic friendship with Baroness Dudevant, better known as the novelist George Sand. Chopin's life was cut short by tuberculosis. He died in 1849 at the age of 39.

Chopin wrote few concertos and sonatas. Instead he perfected freer musical forms. Among his compositions are some 50 mazurkas, 26 preludes, 24 études, 19 nocturnes, 15 waltzes, 11 polonaises, 4 ballades, and 3 sonatas. For his polonaises and mazurkas he used the rhythms and spirit of Polish folk dances.

THESE ARTICLES ARE IN THE FACT-INDEX

Chop suey	Chou En-lai
Chorazin, Palestine	Chouteau family
Chorley, Henry Fothergill	Chrétien, Henri
Choroid	Chrisman, Arthur Bowle
Choron, Alexandre Étienne	Christ, Order of
Chose in action	'Christabel'
Chosroes I	Christchurch, England
Chosroes II	Christchurch, New Zealand
Chouans	

**CHRISTIAN, Kings of Denmark.** Since the middle 1400's every other king of Denmark has borne the name Christian. The first two also ruled Sweden and Norway. The next five ruled Denmark and Norway. Four of them are notable.

**Christian II** (born 1481, ruled 1520-23) is remembered for his "Bloodbath of Stockholm," carried out in 1520. After accepting vows of loyalty from subjugated Swedish nobles, he had them arrested, convicted of heresy, and executed. His treachery set off peasant revolts, however, and he died in prison in 1559.

**Christian IV** (born 1577, ruled 1588-1648) built many elaborate palaces, churches, and fountains. This monarch also founded the Danish postal system.

**Christian IX** (born 1818, ruled 1863-1906) is called the "grandfather of Europe." From his family came kings of Denmark, Norway, and Greece, a czarina of Russia, and a queen of Great Britain.

**Christian X** (born 1870, ruled 1912-47) was 6 feet 7 inches tall. During the World War II occupation of Denmark by the Nazis, he inspired his people by his refusal to collaborate with the invaders.

THESE ARTICLES ARE IN THE FACT-INDEX

Christian VII	Christian era
Christian, Fletcher	Christian flag
Christian, Henry Asbury	Christiansen, F(redrick)
Christian Brothers	Melius
College	Christie, Agatha
Christian Church	Christie, John Walter
Christian Endeavor	Christina



**FRÉDÉRIC FRANÇOIS CHOPIN**

This is the only photograph ever taken of the great composer. Born in Poland, he spent most of his adult life in France.



In this "little town of Bethlehem," in the hills of Palestine, the Christ Child was born. The two towers of the Church of the

Nativity rise at the left. The church stands on the site of the stable in the cave, which was the Child's birthplace.

## Christmas Customs in the New World and in the Old

**CHRISTMAS.** The most joyous and blessed day of the year is Christmas, December 25, when Christians all over the world celebrate the birthday of Jesus Christ. Their thoughts go back to that first Christmas morning, nearly 2,000 years ago, when the newborn Christ Child lay in a manger in the Holy Land. From that humble birthplace, the Child brought new faith and new hope to the world. Simple shepherds and Wise Men alike knelt before the Holy Child in devoted thanks for His birth. (For the story of the birth of Christ, see the article Jesus Christ.)

Today men, women, and children in every Christian land crowd into churches to give their thanks. Many attend midnight services on Christmas Eve. Beautiful decorations adorn the churches and rich music swells from organ and choir. The splendor and beauty is very different from the humble stable in Bethlehem

where Christ was born; but the message He brought to the world is the same—"Glory be to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will toward men."

### Christmas in the Holy Land

On Christmas Eve in Bethlehem a long procession winds through the narrow streets. At its head march church dignitaries, priests, and acolytes, in magnificent robes. They carry a tiny, gilded wicker cradle; in it lies a beautiful wax image of the Infant Jesus.

At the old fortresslike Church of the Nativity they pause as each worshiper stoops to enter the low door. They gather in the Roman Catholic Chapel of St. Catherine, the Latin wing of the Church of the Nativity, for the celebration of midnight mass. Pilgrims from all the world worship throughout reverent yet joyous singing. The ceremony ends when the



**THE CHURCH OF THE NATIVITY**

This tiny entry is all that is left of the original door, which was sealed during the Crusades to bar mounted Saracen warriors.



Ornate lamps filled with pure olive oil light the vaulted interior of the Church of the Nativity, built by Constantine in 327.



GROTTO OF THE NATIVITY—THE BIRTHPLACE OF CHRIST



Under the Church of the Nativity is a grotto, once the cave-stable where the Christ Child is said to have been born.

A star marks the supposedly exact spot. Through a hole in the star's center, pilgrims put their hands down to the holy place.



This is the Grotto of the Nativity. The church belongs to the Orthodox Eastern faith but contains a Roman Catholic altar.

Patriarch of Jerusalem carries the image of the Christ Child to the ornate glass and marble manger in the Grotto of the Nativity under the church.

On the day before Christmas, there are all-denominational services in the nearby Field of the Shepherds and in the courtyard of the Church of the Nativity.

**A Gala Day for American Children**

Christmas is a *joyous* religious feast, and Americans have extended the glad spirit of the day to bring ex-



tra happiness to children. Here is the canopied Manger, raised on marble and lit by lamps on gold chains. Inside is a wax image of the Infant Jesus.

For fortunate American youngsters it is an exciting day of gifts, sparkling Christmas trees, red and white candy canes, turkey, cookies, and ice cream.

In the North people hope for a "white Christmas," when colored lights in the homes, store windows, and even the streets will glisten against fresh snow. Two loved Christmas songs herald the gay beauty of a snowy yule—"Jingle Bells" and "I'm Dreaming of a White



Christmas'. The season has become increasingly commercialized by stores and other businesses; but to children there is still only the glad, friendly spirit of "Merry Christmas to all!"

#### All Help to Make Christmas Festive

Preparations to make the yule season the cheeriest of the year begin long before Christmas Day. Right after Thanksgiving the stores begin to put on their Christmas dress of gleaming decorations. Parades with beautiful floats thread the main streets of large cities. Small towns as well as great cities line their business streets with red, green, and other colored lights, giant wreaths of holly or evergreens, bells, and colorful storybook figures.

Loud-speakers spread the festive music of chimes and carols. On corners and in stores stand the jolly red-suited "helpers of Santa Claus" (see Santa Claus). In residential sections the tangy freshness of fir and pine drifts from Christmas trees. Wreaths, greens, scarlet ribbons, and candles decorate homes. Colored lights sparkle like stars in trees on the lawns or on the outlines of the houses. The very air seems to tingle with eagerness and good cheer.

Schools and other groups rehearse pageants and plays to be given just before the holidays. In many schools boys and girls clean and mend their old toys for less fortunate children. Classes send letters to students in other communities or in foreign lands.

#### Charity and Good Will to the Needy

The American Christmas especially remembers the needy. Every community sees that some joy comes to its less fortunate members. Schools, churches, and charitable civic groups collect food and clothing to be given to the poor. Many groups give entertainment and presents to children whose parents cannot.

In many places Christmas Eve is an outdoor, community festival—a custom that may have come from the outdoor fetes of Spain and Italy. Young and old gather around a huge Christmas tree for carols. In Altadena, Calif., is another type of community fete. Hundreds of giant evergreen trees, planted along both sides of a road, are hung with colored lights to form a "mile of Christmas trees." In the South, fireworks flare on Christmas Eve and boom on Christmas Day.

#### Christmas Helps World Business

The Christmas celebration helps thousands of persons to make a living. They range from American manufacturers and farmers to glass blowers in Germany and Japan, who make ornaments for Christmas trees. Decorations, colored papers for wrapping gifts, ribbons, seals, and greeting cards all represent large businesses. Christmas food is a major item in trade.

Christmas trees also provide considerable business. Once trees were cut wastefully; now the increasing practice is to cut only where crowded young evergreens need to be thinned out.

#### The Manger Scene

Most American Christmas customs were brought here by the colonists from their various homelands. An especially beautiful custom from Latin lands in the religious spirit of Christmas is the manger scene.

#### THE NATIVITY SCENE



In this manger scene, Giotto shows the 'Adoration of the Kings'. The fresco is in the Capella Scrovegni in Padua, Italy.



Today in the United States, as in Europe through the centuries, the manger scene—or crèche—holds reverent interest.

This is a small model of the cave-stable where the Christ Child was born, with figures of people and animals. Italians call it the *presepio*. In Spain it is the *nacimiento*; in France, the *crèche*.

Nearly every Catholic church in the world also has its manger scene, or crib. St. Francis is said to have started the custom. On Christmas Eve in 1224 he is supposed to have set up a stable in a corner of a village church near Assisi, with real persons and an-

## CHRISTMAS

imals to represent those of the first Christmas. Today the usual manger scene is a hill built of stones, covered with moss or greens. The figures of Mary and Joseph are near the cradle. In the background are the animals, shepherds, and the Wise Men. Above the hill are suspended angels, or a star, or dove.

In Catholic lands the whole family helps to build the scene, usually on a table in a corner of the living room. At twilight on Christmas Eve the children light the manger scene with candles. They relight them every night until Epiphany, or Twelfth-night, which is the twelfth day after Christmas. The scene is then put away for the next Christmas season. Many American homes follow this lovely custom.

### Carols Herald Approach of Christmas

Traditional songs, called carols, add to the beauty and fellowship of the Christmas season. Their name in France is *noëls*; in Italy, *le pastorali*; in Germany, *Weihnachtslieder*. They probably began in the early church when, accompanied by songs of joy, Nativity plays told the story of Christ's birth.

Outdoor carol singing seems to have started in the Middle Ages when groups of people went from house to house to sing by torchlight. Through the centuries musicians wrote new carols, some sacred and others to celebrate feasting and drinking. Some of the best-loved carols are 'Silent Night, Holy Night', 'The First Nowell', 'God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen', and 'We Three Kings of Orient Are'.

### Christmas Gifts Are an Ancient Custom

Giving presents is part of Christmas. The custom seems to go back to the ancient Romans, who distributed gifts during their midwinter festival. In the Bible story, the Wise Men, or Magi, brought gifts to the Christ Child the twelfth day after His birth.

In some countries, such as Italy and Spain, children do not get their presents on Christmas—they receive them on January 5, the eve of Epiphany. In several northern European countries they get them December 6, which is the feast of St. Nicholas, patron of children (see Santa Claus).

### The Christmas Tree and Evergreens

The Christmas tree came into general use in comparatively recent times. The custom began in Germany and was first mentioned in an anonymous chronicle in 1605. There is a story, however, that Luther started the custom much earlier, putting candles on an evergreen to represent the stars on Christmas Eve.

Another story tells of St. Boniface when he was a missionary in Germany in the 8th century (see Boni-



**CAROLING THE TIDINGS OF CHRISTMAS**

Members of the Madison Square Boys' Club of New York City carry on English tradition as they carol for neighbors and shut-ins. Their costumes are of the days of 'A Christmas Carol'.

face, St.). He was trying to stamp out the pagan rite of sacrificing people to the oak tree. He led his followers into a forest at yule time. Showing them a fir tree, he said it pointed straight upward to the Christ Child. "Take this tree into your homes," he said, "as a sign of your new worship [Christianity]. It [the fir] lives when earth is darkest and has no stain of blood. Celebrate God's power no more in the forest with shameful rites, but in the sanctity of your homes with laughter and love."

By the beginning of the 19th century nearly all Germany had adopted the Christmas tree. The custom



**GOOD ST. NICHOLAS**

In French and Dutch legends, St. Nicholas, bishop of Myra, distributes gifts. He is the forerunner of Santa Claus.

## A CITY CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS

At the foot of the skyscrapers of New York City's Rockefeller Plaza a huge Christmas tree is surrounded by festive decorations that capture the spirit of the holiday. Many people come to Rockefeller Center each year to admire its Christmas displays.



soon spread to most countries of northern Europe but is still unusual in Italy, Spain, and Latin America. The date of the first Christmas tree in the United States has been given as 1804 at Fort Dearborn in Illinois, but research has failed to substantiate it; the date now accepted is 1832 in Cambridge, Mass.

The use of evergreens for yule decorations began in northern Europe. Sweden, however, uses flowers, because evergreens there symbolize death and grief. Italy, Spain, and some other nations also use flowers. Mistletoe too is a custom from northern Europe, where people once placed it over doorways as charms (see Mistletoe). The use of holly arose because its prickly leaves resembled Christ's crown of thorns and its scarlet berries suggested blood droplets.

### Christmas Today in Northern Lands

In Scandinavian countries the yule celebration begins on Christmas Eve and ends in a Twelfth-night

party. Cakes or bread loaves, baked in the shape of a boar, recall ancient feasts of real boar meat. Little straw goats symbolize the old custom of saving the last sheaf of the harvest for its "magic." In many places, the stock get special feed; and birds find sheaves of unthreshed grain put out for them.

On Christmas Eve the family gathers 'round its lighted Christmas tree. There may be a visit from the *Tomte* (also called *Tomtar*), who are kindly gnomes like brownies. One, as an old man, has a long white beard, wears a red cowl, and rings a bell; the other, as an old woman, carries a basket of gifts.

After games or songs comes a grand supper at 9 or 10 o'clock. The chief dish is *lutefisk*, dried fish that has been buried in ashes or soaked in lye water for days. Dessert is a rice porridge holding an almond or plum, and the one who gets it will be lucky for the next year. On Christmas Day country people go to



### CHRISTMAS OBSERVED—IN THE CAPITAL AND ACROSS THE LAND

Outdoor displays attest to the Christmas spirit all over America. The Washington Monument looms behind the White House

Christmas tree and other decorations on the White House lawn (left). The street at the right is in Minneapolis, Minn.





#### JOY AND SORROW MINGLE IN DUTCH YULETIDE SCENE

In Belgium and The Netherlands, the December 6 feast of St. Nicholas is the traditional day for children to receive gifts. The good get presents, the bad, switches. In this 17th-century painting by Dutch artist Jan Steen, the little girl is delighted with her new toys, while the boy at the left—whose shoe contains only a switch—tearfully regrets his misbehavior in the year past.

church while it is still dark. They rush home, for the first to arrive is said to be sure to reap his grain first in the next summer's harvest.

#### Christmas in Western Europe

Where old customs still exist, a man dressed as St. Nicholas visits German homes on December 5 and asks the children how they behaved during the year. On the feast of St. Nicholas, December 6, good children get gifts; the bad, switches. The happiest time for most German children is Christmas Eve when the whole family gathers about the tree to sing carols.

In Bavaria people representing the Holy Family give pageants on the roads; and tiny lighted trees are set over children's graves on Christmas Eve. In some places boys dressed as the Wise Men tell the Christmas story from house to house.

In Belgium and the Netherlands Christmas is almost entirely a day of church services and quiet family gatherings. In some Dutch villages the young men meet before dawn in the market place to carol. The leader holds aloft a pole with a lighted star to represent the bright star that guided the Wise Men.

The children's special day is the feast of St. Nicholas, December 6. The evening before, the kind saint calls at homes to ask about the children's behavior. The family has spread a white sheet on the floor, and his arrival is announced by a shower of sweets on it. As the children scramble for them, St. Nicholas en-

ters, accompanied by his servant, who holds a rod in one hand for naughty children. After briefly warning or praising the children, and perhaps hearing them recite a verse, St. Nicholas promises to return.

The children then set their wooden shoes in the window or fireplace, or hang stockings, or set out baskets to receive St. Nicholas' gifts. They do not forget, however, to leave food in them for his white horse. While the children sleep, St. Nicholas comes back to cram the shoes or stockings with gifts.

France makes a great fete of yuletide. Street booths show gifts weeks before Christmas, but Christmas trees are rare. On Christmas Eve children expect either the Christ Child (*Petit Noël*) or Father Christmas (*Bonhomme Noël*) to fill their shoes with candy and toys. Grownups exchange gifts on New Year's Day. Almost every French family has a crèche.

Some village children carry a little candlelight crèche through the streets while they carol for pennies. Many districts give Nativity plays, little changed from medieval days. People attend midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, then many make merry all night at family gatherings called *réveillons*.

#### Yuletide in Eastern Europe

In the Balkans and in other lands where the Orthodox Eastern faith prevails, Christmas is not merely the festival of Christ's birthday. The people feel that the Christ Child is actually reborn each Christmas,



and they leave an empty chair for Him at the table and by the fire. Many people strew the floor with hay or straw to symbolize the Bethlehem manger. Ceremonies differ regionally, but everywhere the moment comes when someone says or chants, "Christ is born!" The others answer joyfully, "He is born indeed!"

The yule log is the center of festivities in the Balkans. The Serbs of Yugoslavia bring it in at sunset and burn it all night. On Christmas morning a neighbor enters the house. He throws a gloveful of wheat over the family and strikes the log with a shovel. As the sparks fly, he says: "May you have this year so many oxen, so many horses, so many pigs, so many beehives full of honey, so much happiness."

In Rumania families bake a special cake to represent the swaddling clothes of the Infant Christ. In the daytime from December 24 to 31, children hold processions. They carry a *steaua*, a six-pointed wooden star, high on a pole. A candle gleams through the star's covering of colored paper, and little bells tinkle around it. At night children go from house to house singing greetings (*colinde*), carrying long bags to receive gifts.

### Christmas in Italy and Spain

In Italy and Spain devout Catholics observe a one-day fast, which starts at sunset on December 23. The holy season lasts until Epiphany. Nearly every home has its reproduction of the Nativity. In southern Italy children go about reciting Christmas pieces the week before Christmas. Singers and bagpipers, dressed as shepherds, go from house to house asking permission to chant carols before the *presepio* on Christmas Day.

Italians and Spaniards decorate with flowers instead of evergreens, and some trim olive trees with oranges for Christmas trees. In parts of Italy people light a yule log (*ceppo*). In both Spain and Italy fireworks crackle on Christmas Eve.

In Italy on Christmas Eve the children recite poems or little speeches before the *presepio*. At sunset cannons boom to signal the beginning of the holy festival. After prayers families break their fast with feasts of macaroni, eels, sweetmeats, and usually a capon stuffed with chestnuts. They then draw presents from the Urn of Fate. Later many join processions carrying a waxen image of the Holy Babe to church for midnight Mass.

The Spanish Christmas Eve, *Noche Buena* (Holy Night), is more of a carnival. At night every home lights little oil lamps and illuminates the image of the Virgin with tapers. Children dance around the *naci-*

*miento* (Nativity scene) to the music of tambourines and sing traditional joyous Nativity songs.

Young men and women, dressed in their finest, push through merry crowds in the streets to see the brilliantly lighted shops. At midnight bells call everyone to Mass. Afterward merry crowds fill the streets, watching groups dance the lively *Jota*, the favorite Christmas dance. They stay far into Christmas morn.

Spanish children receive small gifts at the street festivals; but in Italy, wherever there is a yule log, presents are usually given when the log is put on the fire. On Christmas Day children may get small gifts and candy; on New Year's Day relatives give them money. In both Italy and Spain, however, the evening of January 5 is when children put out their shoes in hope of gifts. In Italy an old woman, *La Befana* (the goblin), dressed in rags, rides a broomstick. She is supposed to leave ashes in the shoes of bad children

### A WESTERN INSTITUTION REACHES THE ORIENT

Its mechanical hand waving a welcome to Christmas shoppers, a papier-mâché Santa Claus—some 30 feet tall—hangs in a department store in Tokyo, Japan. Similar decorations—and crowds—are common in United States stores.



Wide World Photos