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Popular Legends Give Identity to Three Wise Men

The Three Wise Men of the East who brought gifts to the infant Saviour have been identified over the centuries as Melchior, Gaspar and Balthazar.

Melchior means "king of light," Gaspar or Caspar, "the white one," and Balthazar, "the lord of treasures."

The first of the magi, offered gold—the emblem of royalty; the second offered frankincense in token of divinity, and the third, myrrh—the prophetic allusion to the persecution unto death which awaited the "Man of Sorrows."

Medieval legend calls them the Three Kings of Cologne, and the Cathedral there, claims their relics. They are commemorated on January 2, 3 and 4th, and particularly on the Feast of Epiphany.

Among the ancient Medes and Persians, a priestly caste considered to have great occult powers, the Magi were members.

According to popular legend, these Magi were reported to have come from the kingdoms of Tarsus, Arabia and Ethiopia.

Late President's Hobby Pays Off At Christmastime

About 2000 to 3000 Christmas trees each year from the estate of the late Franklin D. Roosevelt, find their way into American homes each Christmastide.

Developed as a result of a hobby which occupied much of the late president's time, the groves are a paying project on the Hyde Park, New York, grounds.

SILVERWARE—either sterling or silverplate, is a luxurious gift for one who "matters."

Christmas 'Round World Panorama of Rejoicing

The traditions and customs of Christmas are close to the hearts of all Christian people.

Since the very early days of Christianity, Christmas has come to mean bright candlelight, holly and berries, mistletoe and pine and sweet, heartfelt singing of carols.

Many of the Christmas songs of today originated in old Britain. Wandering bards and harpers roamed o'er the countryside singing their Christmas songs to the accompaniment of the harp, fiddle and flageolet. And today in Britain, these age-old songs still ring out clearly.

Carols are sung on Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, when service-folk and trades-people go from home to home collecting gifts from the folks they have served. Neighbors and friends sing as they go from home to home to taste each family's Yule cake as it is ceremoniously cut.

English kiddies wait for a Santa Claus, who looks very much like our own jolly elf. They also find gifts tied to a Christmas tree. This custom is fairly recent—Queen Victoria was a young bride, her German husband introduced this custom into the British royal household.

In France the Yule log plays an important part in the Christmas festivities. The father and son of the family carry the log into the room; they circle the room three times before they place the log in the fireplace. Soon the log is lighted with a brand of last year's log, and the torch glows, an emblem of the Holy Light of Christ.

In Holland, Dutch kiddies wait anxiously for the arrival of St. Nicholas. Dressed in traditional bishop's robes of black, he carries a crozier and wears a mitre. He brings gifts for the children which he places in their wooden shoes standing in the chimney corner.

In Czechoslovakia, a bright angel accompanies Santa on his errands of gift-giving, descending from heaven on a golden chord.

In the Slavic countries, the children observe the Holy Festival of the Star... they go through the streets carrying the Christmas crib, lighted candles, and a pole with a large star brightly glowing from its tip.

At the Christmas feast, straw is scattered on the floor and 'neath the table, in remembrance of the stable of Bethlehem, and a chair is always placed at the table for the Holy Child.

Swiss children eagerly wait for their gifts to come from a radiant angel who rides in a

POINSETTIA ARE NATIVE AMERICANS

Few people realize that America has given the world its most beloved Christmas plant, the poinsettia. This plant is a native of tropical America. Since florists were able to propagate it and grow it in a small pot, it makes a perfect Christmas plant with its flaming red bracts or leaves.

Because of the sentiment attached to Christmas plants, people hate to throw them away and it isn't necessary to do so, with the poinsettia.

Simply give the plant a resting period about the middle of February in a cool place. Water it occasionally, just enough to keep the wood from wilting. Then, around the first of June, bring it out and cut it back severely.

XMAS CELEBRATIONS ONCE TABOO IN OLD 'MERRY' ENGLAND

In their attempt to do away with all forms of frivolity in England, the Puritan Government banned the celebration of Christmas in 1642. Although holiday traditions were restored by the Stuarts, the Christmas season never quite regained its place of importance in English celebrations.

Today it is observed as a religious day in the churches and as a day for family gatherings, but has never again been celebrated with the boisterous spirit and sumptuous feasting of olden times.

The English people celebrate to a greater extent on Boxing Day, December 26, marking this day with gift-giving and parties. This feast day antedates Christmas and is traced to the custom of giving during the Roman festival of Saturnalia.

So, today the children receive their gifts in boxes and it is the day that employers remember their old employees with gift boxes.

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Candles Burning Clear; Foretell a Bright New Year

According to Christmas tradition, anyone who burns a bayberry candle during the Christmas holidays and if the candle burns bright and clear, will have good luck throughout the year and a long and happy life.

There is also significance to the custom of burning bayberry candles at Christmas. The belief is that during the early days of our country's history, there was a scarcity of animal fat from which to make candles. So the branches of bayberry shrub were covered with wax and burned at Christmas.

For as long as people can remember, the burning of candles has been an important part of the celebration of Christmas Eve.

A WARM GIFT

Electric blankets and comforters are welcome winter additions to any home... the perfect gift, too, for those folks who seem to have everything!

Noted Cartoonist Creator Of Santa as We Know Him

If you picture Santa Claus as a rotund jolly elf, pink-cheeked and with snowy beard and mustachios, then you carry the image of him as he was created about 90 years ago.

Santa Claus, as we know him, was created by Thomas Nast, noted cartoonist whose famous political cartoons helped to break up the notorious Boss Tweed's Tammany ring in New York City.

Mince meat Pie Has Long Past

The mince meat pie first became a part of our Yuletide tradition because the pie was used to represent the cradle of the Christ child surrounded by the gifts of the Magi. The varied ingredients represented the gifts and the pie was baked in an oval, cradle-like shape.

During the time of Oliver Cromwell in England, the Puritans refused to eat mince meat pies because they felt that the custom of feasting and drinking at Christmastime was worldly and sensual.

It is estimated by some authorities that Christmas trees are set up and trimmed in almost two out of three American homes every year.

Prior to the Nast rendition, the artists who attempted to draw Santa Claus could not agree how he looked.

It was Nast who located his home at the North Pole and gave him the sleigh drawn by reindeer. He drew Santa Claus as the jovial gentleman, dressed in red, wearing cap and boots and carrying the huge sack-full of toys and treasures.

Santa Claus in this image, first appeared in 1863, and since that year Santa Claus has remained pretty much the same to all of his admirers, young and old.

IT WON'T BE LONG NOW!



the Gifts are Here!

THE TIME IS NEAR...

YES! SANTA HAS A LARGE BRANCH OFFICE RIGHT HERE AT TINY TYKE, AND WE'VE VOLUNTEERED AS HELPERS—COME IN AND LET US HELP YOU PLAN YOUR CHILDREN'S BIGGEST CHRISTMAS!

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