

### Mistletoe Outlived Sinister Meaning

Mistletoe, once used as a weapon of death, is now almost a universal symbol of love and peace.

According to Norse mythology, there was a god named Balder, who personified the sun, Loki, another god, plotted to destroy Balder.

Balder's mother, when she first learned of Loki's intentions to kill her son, obtained a promise from all living things that they would not harm Balder. All agreed, but the mistletoe, so it was with a mistletoe arrow that Loki induced Balder's blind brother, Hodder, to kill the sun god.

Higher powers intervened, however, and Balder was restored to life. The mistletoe was placed under Frigg's care, and the mother of Balda saw that it was never again used to do harm.

The custom of giving a kiss of love or peace beneath the mistletoe is an assurance that it will never again be used as an instrument of evil.

### Santa Claus, Indiana, Received Famous Name Christmas Eve, 1882

Although many towns have names directly or indirectly associated with Christmas, there is but one town named Santa Claus, in Indiana.

Except for a lucky break, the town would have had another name and hence would not have enjoyed the annual fame that it gathers around the Yuletide season.

The original intention to name the town Santa Fe fell through when the officials at Washington suggested that the town be named something else, since there was already a Santa Fe in New Mexico.

On Christmas Eve, in 1882, the citizens held a mass meeting to select another name, but every one proposed was discarded for one reason or another. The meeting was about to break up when Santa Claus, making his yearly visits in the neighborhood, strode in to get warm. He was in costume and his arrival put one name in every mind.

And so the town was named Santa Claus.

to draw the second award from a hopper containing some 67,500

### NEW YEAR AROUND THE WORLD

Long before history was recorded the Persians discovered sugar cane and made sweetmeats an important part of their New Year celebration. These pagan Persians also made human sacrifices on the eve of the New Year in the belief that their barren fields would be fertilized by the gods.

In ancient China it was a custom to make visits shortly after the New Year had begun. Hilarity reigned supreme in old India and Babylon, where celebration of the first day of a New Year was a very wild affair.

The superstitious people believed that during their frolicsome celebrations the pagan gods were asleep, else conveniently away from home. The Japanese always used holly for decorations at New Year's. It is an old belief that "the prick of the thorns on the leaves would scare away devils." The emperor's first bath, Hatsumizu, taken early New Year morning, was called a "religious rite of cleansing and purification performed by the ruler to bring peace and prosperity to Japan and his people."

Smart children in Belgium gather keys to every room in the house on New Year's eve, and then lock the elders in their rooms on New Year's morning, refusing to release them until promised a portion of sweets.



**YOU'RE ALL DONE, DAD . . .** The old man, having served his time and done his duty during 1951, is ready for rest and retirement. Young 1952, however, eager and ready for the fray, is reaching out to take the cake—or is it pie? Happy New Year, anyway.

"Booster Day" tickets. She drew a ticket that had been turned in by her mother, Mrs. Henry Jackson.

### CONTRIBUTION

## Joel Poinsett, U.S. Statesman, Noted for Flower

Although he was a brilliant statesman, and the friend of four American presidents, Joel Roberts Poinsett is famous chiefly because he introduced the Mexican plant known as the "Painted Leaf", of "Mexican Fire Plant" into the United States.

Poinsett, then U.S. ambassador to Mexico, called the plant to the attention of American botanists and grew the plant himself as a hobby at his South Carolina home, after he left Mexico.

The plant grew heavily in American favor—especially popular at Christmas time—and was renamed poinsettia, in honor of the man who brought it to this country.

Contrary to popular impression, the flaming red bracts of the poinsettia are not flowers, but leaves, and it is for these bracts that the plants are grown.

It is possible to have variations of either pink or white varieties, as well as of the more usual red, popular because it carries out the holiday color scheme of rich bright red with a contrast of the dark green of the leaves.

The beautiful poinsettia, almost a "must" as far as Christmas decorating is concerned, is one of the most temperamental of plants.

The poinsettia thrives in its native Mexico, but elsewhere must be handled carefully—perhaps pampered slightly. However, the brilliantly colored flowers it has at Christmas time is reward enough for any efforts needed to make the plant thrive.

Constant warmth is needed by poinsettias. Temperatures should be kept between 70 and 80 degrees during the day and no less than 65 degrees at night. Any sudden change in temperature and drafts will cause the plant to drop its leaves.

Abundant water is also a necessity, but it should be applied but once a day so that the plant may become moderately dry between waterings. This permits needed oxygen to reach the roots.

Try to give the poinsettia the sunniest spot available. It is wise to fertilize it occasionally with a good commercial food tablet.

### REINDEER

FAIRY TALES and Christmas stories are a Yuletide tradition. It is thus fitting that the story which promises to be America's most popular and long-lived fairy tale is related to the Christmas season.

Once upon a time there was a reindeer with a built-in flashlight bulb for a nose. You know, Rudolph, the red-nosed reindeer. From a small beginning in 1938, the little animal with the built-in beacon has become as familiar as Humpty-Dumpty and Cinderella to youngsters everywhere.

First invented as a sales giveaway promotion for Montgomery Ward by Robert L. May, Rudolph was featured in many free booklets before he became associated with Christmas. Songwriter Johnny Marks liked the title "Rudolph, the Red Nosed Reindeer", so he wrote a song about it. He was so sure he had a success that he started his own Publishing company, using "Rudolph" as his first release. Gene Autry made the initial recording, and that one record sold 2,000,000 copies.

Last year, there were 16 different recordings of the song for sale, ranging from boogie-woogie by Sugar Chile Robinson to Bing Crosby, and cowboy singers.

### Christmas Helps World's Economy

Many people, with the total exception of children, have come to believe that Christmas has become too commercial. In a spiritual sense, this is true to some extent.

Economically, however, no other holiday or festive season contributes so much to the welfare of the world. Christmas has hardly passed into the new year before thousands are at work on toys and myriads of other Christmas specialties for the next holiday. Each year, as the lights of Christmas trees twinkle on a wintry night, how many of us think of the millions who have gained employment through the Christmas shopping industry?

And yet, "too commercial" may be an overstatement. Is it too wrong, once a year, to make the dominate theme one of giving, rather than of receiving? Christmas, and the spirit of Christmas, has endured wars and great chaos through centuries as a time of joyousness and happiness, and giving has always been an important part of the festivities.

The picture of the family united, with presents opened, and children wrapped in the joyousness of Childhood's greatest emotion is still, and will remain, the Christmas story.

**HOUSE CLEANED OUT** GARY, Ind. (P)—A burglar literally "cleaned house." Nicholas G. Sisamis told police someone stole \$1,101.75 worth of property includ-

### Bible Foretold Future On New Year for Scots

The early Scots believed that it was possible to foretell the events of a coming year by turning to the Bible on New Year's Day.

It was long a custom to place the sacred book upon a table and open it at random, placing one finger on the printed page. The entire chapter then was read carefully, with the belief that the message it carried described in some way the happiness or misery in store for the person adhering to the practice.

### SANTA PANICS 'EM

SALEM, Mass. (P)—Three women fainted, a boy's clothes were torn off and others lost their shoes in the mad rush. Citizens of the historic city were not hunting a witch—just fighting to get into the state armory, where a chamber of commerce Santa Claus was giving presents.

### MAIL GOES THROUGH

SPARTA, Ill. (P)—When snow blocks automobile travel, a rural carrier, Waldemar Klopfer, calls on a tractor owner to help him carry out the pledge, "the mail must go through." He makes his rounds riding on the tractor's drawbar.

ing cash, war bonds, a fur coat, clothing, jewelry, linens and a radio.

**Merry Christmas**

For our many good friends we wish only that they may share fully in it.

**KELLY'S DEPT. STORE**  
Benson, N. C.  
Phone 3716

**Season's Greetings**

We of the Steinberg Dept. Store wish to thank our customers for their continuous support in the past and it is our wish that we may be able to serve you in the years to come.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

**STEINBERG'S DEPARTMENT STORE**  
PHONE 2871 ERWIN, N. C.

A million thanks for your friendship and patronage in the past year! May the holidays bring you as many happy tokens in the bright year a-coming!

**HIGHT PAINT AND PAPER SHOP**  
Mr. and Mrs. Marvin Hight  
Dunn, N. C.

**HOLY NIGHT**

TO OUR faithful old friends, to our many new friends—and to all of you whose friendship we hope to earn, we extend our wishes for a most cheerful Christmas Holiday! May it be the happiest, merriest ever . . .

**SILAS WHITTENTON**  
Transfer Co.  
N. Wilson Ave. Dunn, N. C.

**Merry Christmas**

1951

**Bass Electric Company**  
E. BROAD ST. DUNN, N. C.