

Speaking of Christmas

...continued. Naturally, it burned with a pungent odor and stockings were hung over the fireplace to absorb some of this odor and to protect the owners from evil spirits. . . Christmas Eve, 1863, saw a near tragedy in Virginia City, Nevada. . . Two friends celebrated with a terrific round of festivity. . . Just as dawn was breaking, they embarked on a perilous promenade over the town's rooftops. . . A policeman, mistaking them for burglars, drew his revolver and prepared to shoot—but a passerby stopped him. . . Had he fired and the bullets found the



ONE CONSOLATION that mail clerks Chan Burress and Hardy Noland have is that the Yuletide rush only comes once a year. The

postal flood reached its high-water mark Tuesday and has receded since then. (Mountaineer Photo).



May yours be a holiday overflowing with happiness and good cheer.

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mark, the world would have been deprived of two great humorists—Artemus Ward (Charles Farrar Browne) and Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens). . . Mince pies so long a part of our Christmas tradition, originally had a deeply symbolic significance. . . The first mince pies were patterned in oblong shape, after the manger in which Christ was born. . . The crust represented the gold brought by the Three Wise Men; the many spices, the frankincense and myrrh. . . On May 11, 1659, the general court of Massachusetts Bay outlawed Christmas. . . Anyone celebrating, stopping work, serving holiday fare or deviating from normal daily life

Yule Customs Were Old In Fourth Century

The exact age of the Christmas festival is not known. Records show, however, that the holiday was spoken of in the fourth century as a custom of long standing. Christmas began as Christ's Mass, or the Mass of Christ, sometime during the fourth century. It took that long after the blessed night for the great importance of Christ's birth to be realized by the people. Until this time it had been the custom of the church to celebrate the anniversaries of deaths, rather than births. Christ's birthday was the first to be made an occasion for feasting.

The date for the celebration of the Christ Mass was selected by the church. So many years had elapsed that the actual date of His birth could only be a matter of conjecture.

The festival and spirit of Christmas spread through the Christian worlds. Pagan customs, even as they do today, attempted to adapt themselves to the Christmas season.

For many years after the origin of Christ's Mass the church frowned upon the practice of exchanging gifts during the festival season. Later, however, the practice was condoned, in remembrance of the spirit of the Three Kings of the Orient who had followed a shining

would be fined five shillings. . . The righteous Puritans were sure they were acting wisely—for how could good Christians condone the pagan origin of Christmas? Did not such a holiday encourage excess eating and drinking? . . . It was 22 years before that law was repealed.

star to the crib of the new-born Christ, bringing presents with a sense of humility.

Florida's cane sugar industry produces about 100,000 tons of sugar a year.

Rather Relax Than Work

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Entrants in a contest to win an automatic clothes dryer were asked to say why they wanted to win. One frank housewife said she wanted to trade the dryer in on a TV set.

Christmas Greens Brighten Home

A few well placed Christmas greens can do much to brighten a house at Christmas time. Properly clipped, the branches will never be missed, and might improve the looks of the tree from which they

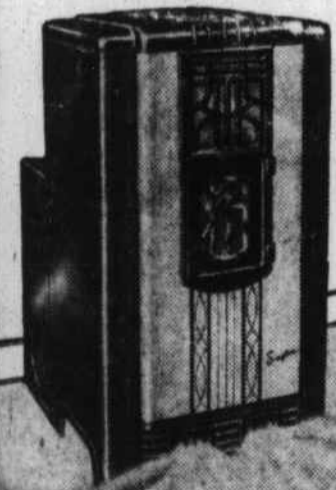
are cut. Hemlock, red cedar, juniper, yew, pitch pine, white pine, will make suitable material for a spray to decorate a mantel, door, or a spray for a newel post. In pruning, however, keep in mind the natural appearance of the tree from which you clip branches.



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AND A VERY

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