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TORRANCE

**HOBBY SHOP**

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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, the Magi were considered to have great occult powers. They 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 harpists and harpers roamed over 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

**POINSETTIAS 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.

**THE TRADITIONS OF CHRISTMAS**

These and many more are the interesting, exciting customs that make up the Christmas observances throughout the Christian world.

**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 mustaches, 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.

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**TO SAY 'MERRY CHRISTMAS' ...**

It's easy to say "Merry Christmas" in many languages with this check-list of greetings in other tongues!

Say "Joyeux Noel," in French; "Froeliche Weihnachten" in German; "Buon Natale" in Italian. The Spanish have the words for it with "Felices Pascuas" or "Feliz Navidad." In Holland they say "Een Vrolijk Kerstfeest!" the Danes greet each other with "En Gledelig Jule," or as the Norwegians would say, "Gledelig Jule."

In Czechoslovakia, they greet one another with "Veselle Vanocce;" in Swedish, "God Jule," and to each and every one of you, we say, "The Merriest Christmas Ever."

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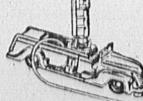
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