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## MISTLETOE ..TALES

### LEGENDS ABOUT THE FLORAL EMBLEM

**M**ISTLETOE, associated with both comedy and tragedy, owes its elevation to the glory of a prominent Christmas decoration to the relics of Druidical superstition and again, even further back, to traditions of Norse mythology, in which it played an important part.

Long before kissing was invented or ballads were made and sung the mistletoe was a sort of fetish and is as capricious as most heathen deities, inasmuch as it has a marked preference in the choice of a tree to grow upon, the oak, the larch and the pear being the least favored, while it loves the poplar, hawthorn, lime, maple, mountain ash and, first and foremost of all, the apple tree. It roots firmly, grows slowly, gradually stifles the tree it embraces and then dies itself! In ancient lore it had rare medicinal virtues, but these have found oblivion with the lapse of time.

Norse fables tell us that Baldur, the bright and the beautiful, the god of light, was regarded with jealousy by some of the other deities, and Friga, to protect him, made everything in heaven and earth swear to do him no harm. But disregarding the mistletoe as being so slight and weak she omitted her precaution in its case. Loki, the malevolent fire god, seizing this chance, bewitched a twig of mistletoe till it swelled to the size of a spear and, slyly giving it to blind Hodur, told him to throw it among the gods when they were at play.

It struck Baldur and killed him, but Friga, extraneously, restored him to life and thereafter guarded the mistletoe, which the gods at her pleading decided should be unable to do any mischief again unless it touched the earth. For this reason it always hangs on high, and the vigilant goddess was propitiated by a sign of amity and good will.

Many of the most important rites of the Druids were performed in connection with it, and today men and maidens hold that it constitutes a sanction for salutes that might otherwise be too daring. Yet the old mysterious glamour of its power to harm still clings to it and imparts a touch of superstitious witchery to the fragile fate of the gay young bride who, mad with merriment, hid in the oak chest that proved her tomb.

### CHRISTMAS GREEN.

**C**HRISTMAS green in hearts we keep,  
Heedless of the scowling weather,  
Heedless of the gusts that sweep  
O'er the woodlands and the heather.  
Masses in the night we sing  
By the side of floral manger,  
While the wickets widely swing  
For the pilgrim and the stranger.  
Cedars with the roses twine  
Round the chancel's inner railing,  
While the winds and waves combine  
Carnivals and dirges waiting;  
While the crown of drifted snow  
Clusters o'er the marble's whiteness,  
Thence, none say, the arctic fire  
Glimmers with a summer brightness.



Faces of the loved and lost  
Through the courts where we assemble,  
Rubrics of years are crossed  
As in Yule's sweet walks we ramble.  
Oh, the dear, the ever mourned!

Ye, in more than maiden beauty,  
Are like angel guards returned,  
Sharers in this holy duty.

Children with their banners, see,  
In the chapel alcoves gather;  
Happy they with him to be  
Children of a common Father.  
Hear the organ's prelude ring  
With the welcome to the morning,  
While the festal censers swing  
And the altar lights are burning.

Lovely Yule, though shadows steal  
Unawares o'er all thy brightness,  
Though yon naked boughs reveal  
Marble mounds of snowy whiteness,  
Yet the wreath of Christmas day  
Green and fragrant ever liveth,  
For the hand that took away  
Is the hand that once more giveth.  
—William B. Chisholm.

### The Christmas Tree.

Of all the Christmas greens the tree is the aristocratic monarch. Used not so much as an actual decoration itself as a background for decoration, it figures as the central ornament in the Christmas festivities. Its trimming is a matter of mystery, its burden of lights, tinsel and finery the rarest spectacle that juvenile eyes ever look upon, and its brief but triumphant career an epoch in home life to be long remembered.—Philadelphia Times.

### HOW TO CARVE A TURKEY.

The Art Made Plain For the President of the Feast.

**C**USTOM has made it usual hereabouts to eat turkey for our Christmas dinner, and accordingly the festive bird will grace many a table. But it is not everybody who knows how to carve a turkey, and the hints given here may help many a bewildered man to so demean himself that the ordeal may not disgrace him in the eyes of the wife of his bosom, as well as of those guests who may be present at his board.

Have the turkey resting upon its back. Put the two tined fork in about an inch in front of the peak of the breastbone, where it will sink into a hollow formed by the peculiar conformation of the breastbone. The bird is then held firmly while the carving is being done.

The first thing to do is to take off the legs at the second joint. Cut down alongside the leg and bear outward a little, with the knife set well in.

The knife is inserted above the leg, and after making an incision it is pressed outward. The second joint then parts easily from the body. After both legs are removed in this manner the wings should be cut off, the knife being used on practically the same principle as that employed in removing the legs.

The next point for the skillful carver is to separate the "drumstick," or first joint, from the rest of the leg. This is done by fixing the fork in the second joint of the turkey. Then an incision is made at the joint, and the end of the leg is then pressed down with the knife.

The breast of white meat is now attacked. The fork is again placed over the breastbone in the original position, and slices are removed from the breast. The slicing should commence near the peak of the breastbone, the cuts being taken thinly, the knife held horizontally and the cuts extending downward toward the wings. After the meat has been taken from both sides of the turkey's breast in this fashion the knife is inserted transversely behind the little projection on the breast between the peak and the neck. This is formed by the "wishbone," or "merry thought." The knife slips easily through this and the breastbone, so that the "wishbone" is easily removed, carrying with it a liberal portion of white meat. The removal of the "wishbone" makes a convenient opening into the interior of the turkey, through which a spoon may be inserted for the removal of the tasty dressing.

Nothing now remains but the carcass of the turkey, and the only task is to disjoint it. This is done by first removing the breastbone. By means of the fork the peak of the bone is raised and swung over toward the neck, disjoining it near the base of the latter. The neck, if desired, can be removed, leaving only one more portion of the bird to be dealt with. This is the backbone.

The backbone is broken about three inches above the tail, and there you are. The dismemberment of your turkey is now complete.

### MAIL FOR SANTA CLAUS.

Some Strange Letters at Christmas Time.

**H**ERE is an address I never noticed until this year," said a postoffice clerk, sorting out some half dozen letters with "Mr. Santa Claus, Joyland,"



INTERSTATE AND WEST INDIAN EXPOSITION.  
The South Carolina Inland and West Indian exposition, at Charleston, was opened with appropriate ceremonies on December 2. The illustration shows a portrait of the president of the exposition, F. W. Wagener, and two emblematic groups of statuary.

### MERRY XMAS WAYS.

#### HOW THE ANCIENTS CELEBRATED THE COMING OF YULETIDE.

The Mistletoe and the Yule Log Were in Evidence—Festivities Began a Week Before Christmas Day—But There Was No Santa Claus.

**I**T is said that the American customs of celebrating the greatest of all festival days, Christmas, are descended from or are survivals of the old world customs which existed in England a couple of centuries ago. Yet when these latter are examined into it requires a wide stretch of an unusually elastic imagination to link the ways of the present day with those of the seventeenth or even the eighteenth century.

It seems probable that the folks of half a dozen generations ago crowded more merriment into the Christmas season than we of this age do, and they went about it with the same prearranged systematic care that a commercial prince now devotes to some great



GATHERING THE HOLLY AND MISTLETOE.

financial coup, but the fun was of a bolstersome kind, quite inconsistent with the crowded way of living these days, says the Washington Post. If one of the old merry-makers could come to life on Christmas day and celebrate the festival in the way fashion and custom demanded in his time, he would probably find himself in the lockup charged with rudely disturbing the peace.

Noise, bluster, feasting, drinking and horseplay were the chief features of the old time English Christmas. Gift-making existed as it had for many previous centuries, but that was merely an incidental feature and not nearly so important as the work of the pompous butler, upon whom devolved the responsibility of carrying into the dining hall the great boar's head.

The oldtime Christmas began a week before the arrival of the day, just as the shoppers of today rush out with fat purses to lure the holiday bargain. But purchasing gifts did not bother the heads or weary the bodies of the old world folks.

The gathering of the holly and mis-

tletoe for the decoration of house and church was their initial task, and it was performed by the village en masse, headed by brave pipers and fiddlers, who filled the forests with the joyful melodies of Christmastide. It was the pagans who first used holly and mistletoe for observances, and the practice was adopted by the early Christian churches. The Greeks and Romans also used them in their religious ceremonies, as did the Druids and the Celtic and Gothic nations. So the young maid of today who stands alluringly under a sprig of mistletoe may find satisfaction in knowing that she is following the precedent of centuries.

In Druidical times the simple peasants flocked in crowds to join the processions, in which the Druidical priests were the foremost actors. The train was headed by the bards singing canticles and hymns. A herald preceded three Druids, furnished with implements for the purpose of cutting the mystic plant—upright hatchets of brass, fixed to staves. Then followed the prince or chief of the Druids, accompanied by all his flock and followers. The chief mounted the oak, with a golden sickle detaching the mistletoe and presenting it to the priests, who received and bore the branches away with deep reverence. On the first day of the year the branches, after resting on the Druidical altars in the interval, were distributed among the people as a sacred and holy plant, the Druids crying, "The mistletoe for the new year!"

Many were the superstitious attaching to this plant. Among the latter day charms associated with it, when suspended in a bunch in the servants' hall, was the traditional and favorite observance of kissing the maids under its branches, the superstition prevailing that the maiden who missed being heartily kissed under her mistletoe at Christmas would forfeit her chance of early matrimony and certainly not be married in the ensuing twelve months.

A medieval observance which always followed the gathering of holly and mistletoe was the cutting and hauling home of the Yule log. The favorite Yule log was a cross grained block of elm or the rugged root of a tree of fantastic and grotesque form.

Formerly the members of the family and guests sat down in turn on the Yule log, the throne of the master of the revels, sang a Yule song and drank to a merry Christmas and happy new year. As part of their feast Yule-dough or Yule cakes were consumed. These bore impressed figures in the shape of an infant. Sometimes they were made in the form of an infant. Nor was the matter overlooked.

#### Compelled to Cut it Out.

The publishers of The Examiner regret to state that it will be impossible to issue the promised Anniversary Edition of The Examiner at the time stated, January 2, 1902. We are compelled to cut out that which promised to be the most elaborate edition of a newspaper ever issued in Eastern Oregon, owing to the non-support, or evident indifference, of the people from whom we expected the most support in a financial way to enable us to get up the expensive edition of 5,000 copies. A half dozen prominent stockmen of Lake county, who appreciate The Examiner's stand for their interests against the leasing of the public lands, did contribute liberally, but their contributions in total would scarcely pay for the fine half-tone cuts with which the edition was to have been embellished. The order for cuts has been countermanded. At some time in the near future, when all the stockmen return with their flocks from the desert, we will again make an attempt to take up the work and carry it out to perfection. We very much regret that we failed in the project to get out this splendid edition, but had we received the support and encouragement of those who should have been most interested in the work we should have carried out our plans. As it is, with a part of the material for the edition already ordered, and for which we had to pay, we are looser to the extent of about 50 "hog dollars." The edition was to have been an elaborate advertisement of the resources and a general write-up of Lake county, with considerable space set apart in the interest of the small stockmen of this county.