

Historians Trace Christmas Tree Legends

In the ninth century, the good Saint Winifred traveled about Northern Germany, preaching Christianity. One Christmas Eve, he came upon a group of people gathered around a huge oak tree to offer human sacrifice to their pagan gods. According to legend, Saint Winifred hewed down the great oak, and as it fell, a tall young fir appeared in its place. The appearance of the tree was hailed far and wide as a miracle, and from that day on, it became the custom for German families to gather about a tall evergreen on Christmas Eve.

Some historians trace the origin of lighting the Christmas tree to Martin Luther, who lived from 1483 to 1546. It is said he was strolling through the countryside one Christmas Eve, awed by the beauty of the evergreen forest under the starry sky. When he came home, he tried to re-create the scene for his family by attaching some lighted candles to a small evergreen.

These customs spread to the Scandinavian countries in the early nineteenth century, and from there to France and England. Records show that 35,000 Christmas trees were sold in Paris in 1890!

Yet the evergreen was symbolic in religious rites—even before the birth of Christ. Ancient Egyptians, when they observed the winter solstice, brought green date palms into their homes, as a symbol of "life triumphant over death." When the Romans celebrated the feast of Saturn, a part of the ceremony was the raising of an evergreen bough. And the early Scandinavians also did homage to the fir tree. To these peoples, the evergreen—tall and lush when everything around it had succumbed to winter's frost—was a wondrous thing . . . enjoying special favor from the gods.

Hessian soldiers brought the first Christmas tree to America. But the custom of lighting trees in public places originated here. Today, the United States has a national Christmas Tree, designated by the Department of the Interior. It is 287 feet high and is located in General Grant National Park near Fresno, California.

This season, two-thirds of the homes across the nation will be glowing with the warm lights of the Christmas tree. But something new will be added. Buffet tables and mantel pieces will sport their own tiny version of nature's own evergreen. Instructions for making these decorative little trees are easy to follow. Get the whole family together to make them.

A very decorative, three-dimensional tree can be made from strips of paper. First cut graduated strips, small ones for the top branches of the tree and longer ones for the bottom branches. Make the strips about an inch wide. Color the strips with crayons. Unusual patterns can be achieved by placing a textured material under the paper, and then rubbing the side of a crayon over the paper. A piece of corrugated board, a rubber sink mat, or anything that has a kind of bumpy or uneven surface will work well for "texture rubbings." Then punch holes, one on each end of the strips of paper. Place one end of the strip over the other to form an elongated loop matching the holes on each end. Then slip the looped strips of paper on to a stick. Start with the larger strips first and finish up with the smaller ones. Insert the stick into a block of clay. Arrange the "branches" so they are even all around the tree. Then add a star or angel to the top of the tree.

Another colorful tree can be made from crayons and freezer paper. First sprinkle fine crayon shavings on to the waxy side of a sheet of freezer paper. Get as transparent a freezer paper as you can; the more transparent the paper, the more luminous the color will be. Use an old vegetable grater to make the crayon shavings, or simply scrape the wax crayon with a flat stick, such as a tongue depressor. When a generous sprinkling of bright crayon shavings has been scattered over the freezer paper, cover with a second sheet of freezer paper. This time, be sure to place the waxy side face down. In other words, the two waxy sides must face each other. Apply a warm, not hot, iron in order to melt the crayon and fuse the two waxy sheets together. In ironing the paper, use a lifting motion, rather than a gliding motion, in order to keep the colors from blending together too much. Cut four tall triangular shapes from these sheets. Make a half inch crease along the two long sides of each of the triangles. Staple the folded edge of one triangle to the folded edge of another. Repeat until all four triangles have been stapled together to form a tall pyramidal shape. A long chain of gold beads or a similar Christmas decoration can be strung around the tree. Punch holes through the stapled edges, and insert the chain. Start near the top, and go around the tree several times until you reach the bottom. Then add a



MANY LEGENDS have evolved around the Christmas tree.

Christmas ornament to the top of the tree.

A third mantel or table decoration can be made from a sheet of paper approximately 12 inches by 24 inches in size. First draw a semi-circle on the paper, with a twelve-inch radius. Cut it out. Then fold the semi-circle in half, forming a quarter of a pie shape. Fold in half two or three more times. Now open the folds, and refold into accordion pleats, along the creases you just made. Place the paper on a flat surface, and decorate by coloring alternate plates with crayons. You can also make slits in the uncolored pleats, to which you can later attach small ornaments. Tape the two straight edges together to form a cone-shaped tree. Insert a stick through the top end, and hold in place with tape. Then insert the "trunk" of the tree into a paper dish filled with clay. A small ornament can be placed on top of the tree as the finishing touch.

While you're decorating your trees, you might remember that the evergreen didn't always have its gay Christmas dress of brightly colored bulbs and balls, nor its tinsel and angel hair. At one time, popcorn and tufts of cotton were used to simulate snow . . . apples, and strings of cranberries provided color. The idea of decorating the tree probably stems from

the ancient custom of hanging foodstuffs high on the branches of evergreens to keep them out of the reach of prowling animals.

When its purpose is served, the tree should be disposed of properly. A Twelfth Night ceremony, during which Christmas greenery is collected and burned in a blaze of glory, is the custom in some American cities . . . a fitting end for a tree of such rich tradition and sentiment.

Spanish Children Look To Epiphany

MADRID (UPI)—The climax of the Christmas season in Spain comes Jan. 6, the "Dia de los Reyes Magos"—Day of the Kings, or Epiphany—when the Spanish equivalent of Santa Claus arrives. Children anticipate the day for weeks. On Epiphany Eve, they place their shoes on balconies or near the front door and fill them with straw or grain for the Kings' horses. The next day they find the shoes filled with gifts.

On Christmas Day itself, no gifts are exchanged, generally speaking, although it is customary on that day to remember those who have rendered service during the year with gifts of money. The recipients include porters, elevator boys, newsboys, postmen, police and others.

Be Careful To Select The Correct Gift

NEW YORK (NEA) — Besides money, spend a little thought and time in selecting toys.

Double check the age levels of the children. Also, confer with the parents to find out the expanding interests and capabilities of their offspring. If this is impossible, consult a list of children's play interests at different age levels which most good toy departments have on hand.

Remember that children need a well balanced selection of toys which contributes to physical development and to creative and dramatic play. They need toys which will help them imitate the activities of the grownup world and toys which encourage group participation.

Keep in mind that safety of toys is based on suitability. A knife, for example, in a hobby set is fine for the school age youngster but it could be dangerous in the hands of a toddler.

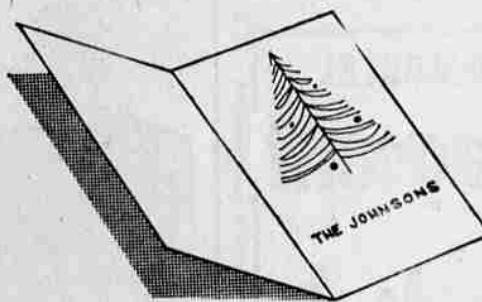
Make sure that toys for crib and play pen tots are especially designed for safe sucking, have smooth edges and no loose parts that the child might detach and swallow.

There are seven points on the crown of the Statue of Liberty.

For Greetings Distinctively Yours



CHRISTMAS CARDS
Imprinted With Your Name



Complete selection in design and price

Shaw Stationery Company
729 Main Phone TU 2-2586

LaPointe's Young Shop Has The Official Santa's Helpers ...

for the YOUNG SET



Right:

Your petite junior will be charming in this sleeveless taffeta party dress. Just right for the holiday season. Colors: aqua or pink. Sub-teen sizes 6 to 14. \$10.98.

Left:

Let the small fry romp in their Christmas play clothes. Red buttons with red and white top, completely washable. Quilted cotton with everglaze polished print. Sizes 2 to 6X. \$4.98 per set.

2 piece Footsy . . . all boys and girls sizes S-M-L. \$3.98



Nitey Night Christmas Prints

Nitey Nite's Arctic Weight pajamas fleecy cotton, Perryized for shrink-resistance.

- a. Boy's or girl's ski pajama: red on white print top, easy-on neck. Red pants, elastic waist. 3-8. \$3.00
- b. Boys' or girls' 3-way Switchabout: 2" grow feature, grippers, plastic sole booties. Red on White. 0-4. \$3.00
- c. Drink 'n' Wet doll: curly hair, movable limbs. In own Nitey Nite sleeper. \$4.00



... YOUNG SHOP

Buyer Should Tailor Gift For Man In Toiletries

NEW YORK (UPI)—Men's toiletries, one of the most popular Christmas gift items, can wind up merely occupying shelf space unless some thought is given to choice, according to an expert in the field.

"Sometimes there is a great difference between what a man can use or wants and what he gets in toiletries, as is often the case in ties," said Howard M. Rand Jr., of Citation House.

Arkansas has more species of wild flowers than any other state in the U.S.

Rand said research had deter-

mined that women favor a long, slender shape for a bottle, whereas men prefer a short, squat shape.

An estimated billion Christmas decorations will be used on American trees this year.

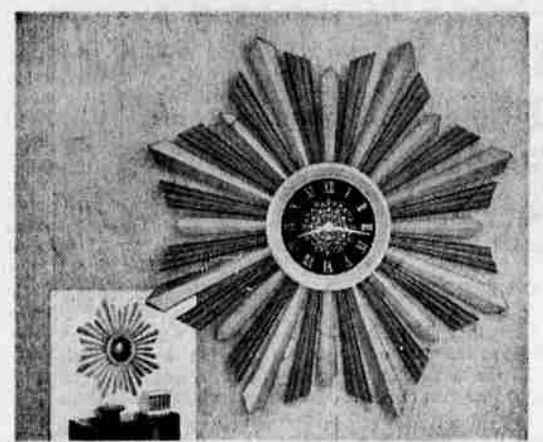


Gifts for Good Living

Don't Miss The Grand Christmas Opening of Miller's Downstairs Gift Shoppe



Hand Cut Crystal Bowl 29.95
Candle Sticks to match . . . pair \$11.98



Special! Wall Clock 19.95

Large 8 day wind clock, gold with black or white face and gold numerals, 36" across.
Many other wall clocks, 3 day winds, all sizes.

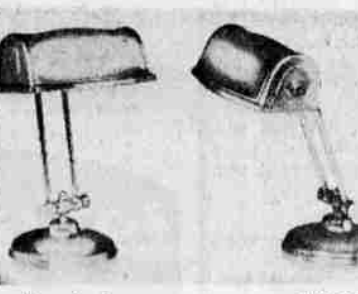


Candy Dishes 4.98 to 9.98
Candy dishes . . . tall cut glass, non-tarnish silver trim, also milk glass.



Hammered Copper Tray 11.98
Matching Coffee Pot 19.98

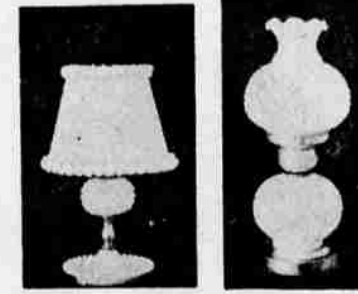
Glowing copper for the gracious hostess or to complement the decor of any room.



Desk Lamps 14.95
Decorative lamps of solid brass, adjustable. Piano lamps also.

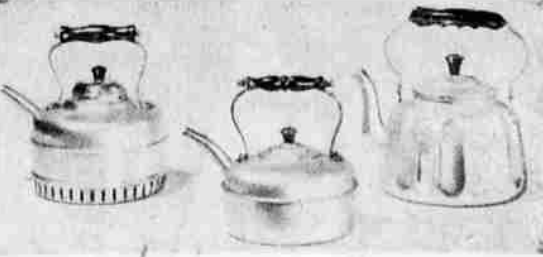


Cut Glass Salt and Peppers
Hand cut and polished, imported from West Germany.



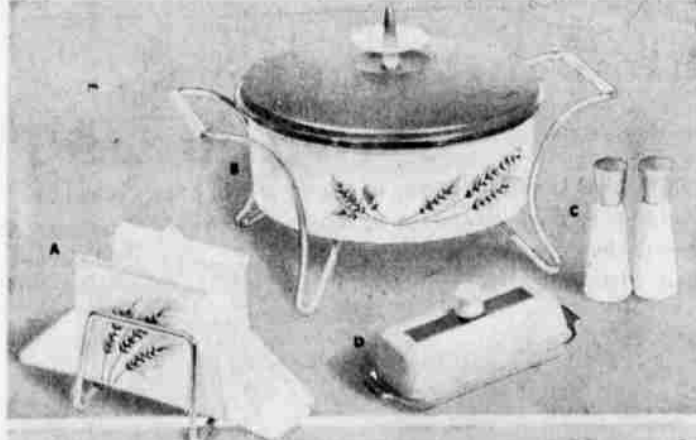
Milk Glass Lamps
Left 5.98 and 6.98
Lamp on Right 6.98

Dainty milkglass lamps for any room in the home.



Copper Tea Kettles 8.95 to 19.95

Heavy copper in many sizes and shapes imported from Holland, Sweden and England.



Newest Creation . . . Casual Living

Casseroles or coffees with or without warmers in newest designs for casual living. All accessories available . . . salt & peppers, jam and toast sets. In colors of yellow, turquoise, pink with popular copper accents or in all chrome.



Milk Glass Lamp 9.98

Lovely authentic colonial styling perfect for bedside or living room. Buttons and bows pattern. \$14.98.