

"The Tyrolean Song" Became Great Hymn "Silent Night"

High in the Austrian Alps, in the regions known as the Tyrol — "the land in the mountains" — is to be found the birthplace of Silent Night, Holy Night. Here, the towering Tyrolean peaks, centuries old and famed for their snow-capped grandeur rise in lofty simplicity into the cool, clear air, guarding little smiling, peaceful valleys.

Far up in these Alpine mountains, where love of music is nature's gift to every child, nestles the remote town of Oberndorf, Austria. It was here that years ago in 1818 lived a devout young Lutheran pastor, the Rev. Joseph Mohr.

Together with his friend, the village schoolmaster and church organist, Franz Gruber, Pastor Mohr destined to give the world this beautiful and most famous of all Christmas hymns.

The two men, both lovers of great music, had often talked of the fact that "the perfect Christmas song had not yet been found". Meditating on this thought, Mohr sat in his church study on Christmas Eve, 1818.

Outside, the hushed silence of the night heightened the snow-covered beauty and peaceful stillness of the mountain scene. The purity and calmness of the high peaks filled his heart with radiant peace and joy of the first Christmas tidings, "Jesus, The Savior Is Born".

The thoughts which had been long forming in his mind suddenly found clear, musical expressions that night in the song which we have since come to know and love as Silent Night, Holy Night.

The next morning, Christmas Day, Reverend Mohr hurried to his friend's home with the manuscript of his precious song. Gruber read it intently and exclaimed with uncontrolled enthusiasm, "Friend Mohr, you have found it—the right song—God be praised!"

Gruber, thrilled with the spirit of his friend's verses, at once set to work to compose a perfect melody for "the perfect song".

Finally, the soft, flowing air we now use came to Franz. "It sings itself, your song", he cried to the delighted priest. Gruber's real contribution to music lies in the beauty and simplicity of the tune, in its perfect blending in spirit with the pastor's verses. The two men then sang the hymn over together, to have it ready for the church devotions that night.

Later in the same evening, when the villagers were gathered in the grey little church, Reverend Mohr and Gruber sang their new Christmas song before its first audience. It touched the listeners deeply, and after the service, they thanked the two friends with tears of joy in their eyes.

The story of how the song spread from its mountain home in the Tyrol, to become one of the Christmas favorites in all parts of the world is full of interest. Only very slowly did it come into fame.

For nearly a year after its first appearance the song lay almost forgotten in Gruber's desk. Then, in November, 1819, the church organ had to be repaired, and the repair man, when he had finished with his work, asked Gruber to play something to test the organ. The beautiful melody of Silent Night came back to Gruber's mind, and he played it with all its powerful simplicity and beauty. So entranced was the organ-builder that he begged to take a copy of the song home with him to his little town across the mountains.

From one music lover to another the hymn was passed on. Still it was without a name, and was known simply as The Tyrolean Song, because it had first come from the Tyrolean Alps. With that title it was printed in 1842 for the first time, fully 25 years after it had been composed!

From that time on, the song has been translated into many other languages and carried to all parts of the world to become the most famous and best loved of all Christmas songs and hymns. It touches the heartfelt need, and to all who hear it, it brings the Savior's calm and peace in its strains of beauty and joy.

In almost every town and village in America this Christmas a church choir will render at least a portion of George Frederick Handel's the "Messiah". When carolers sing "Joy to the World" they'll be singing part of the "Messiah" too, for that carol comes from themes found in the great oratorio. Handel also composed the musical "The Three Shepherds Watched Their Flocks."

It is a strange fact, but both Bach and Handel were born in 1685, lived for many years within thirty miles of each other, and never met. Yet today, the Christmas music they wrote is sung by men, women and children in countless churches of many faiths all over the world.

Music By Bach, Handel

For a great many people the music of Bach and Handel makes difficult listening until Christmas comes around. Then, suddenly, everybody starts singing and humming tunes by the two old masters.

Christmas Eve Memory Check

DID YOU REMEMBER...
...to take home a few extra toys? If you are expecting two or three neighborhood small fry to drop in, you can be sure six will show up. And three toys and six children do not enhance "Peace on Earth."

DID YOU REMEMBER...
To check the Christmas tree lights? Not day before yesterday. Not last week. We mean right now. A few stores are still open and you can supply new ones. Better pick up a few more ornaments too.

DID YOU REMEMBER...
Those last minute Christmas cards? If not, you can send telegrams to reach them by December 25. You can even have a messenger call at your house while the guests you invited in for snacks are there, and probably everybody will remember someone far away who should have a Christmas greeting.

DID YOU REMEMBER...
To hang some kind of Christmas decoration outside the house so passing strangers may enjoy some of the Christmas glow that is in your home and reflect it around your town? Remember, everyone has a part in this Christmas cheer, not just your small

Flowers Are Part Of Yule Legends

There are several flowers appropriate during the Yuletide season which are connected with the birth of Christ by the legends of history. Sainfoin, or "Holy Hay," is said to have cradled the infant Christ in his red bishop's robe and under the flower of the Virgin Mary, and is said to be the emblem of the candles she lighted on Christmas.

According to legend, the Christmas rose was divinely created. A shepherd maid wept at having no gift to lay before the Babe in the manger. Suddenly an angel appeared to her. On hearing why the maiden wept, the angel touched the ground where her tears had fallen and immediately the place was white with Christmas roses, which the maid gathered and laid in the manger.

The chrysanthemum is said to have appeared first on Christmas Eve near the manger as a sign to the Wise Men that they had reached the spot where the star had hidden them.

circle, and the more cheer you scatter, the more you will gather.

Singapore Christmas

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by a throbbing generator behind the only two storey building in the place, the coffee shop.
The stage was brightly decorated in red and gold, and a chalky-faced boy with reddened lips and blackened eyes postured and yelled in a glittering costume of ancient China.
Up the stairs of the coffee shop we went. The drum of the society stood against the wall, surmounted by a banner. At the tables sat the worthies of the district, fish dealers, the owner of a pepper plantation, a maker of porcelain cups to catch rubber from the trees of neighbouring estates and dealers in various trader's dinner jackets they were transformed from their usual singlets and loose cotton trousers. They greeted us with a murmur in the wordless language used everywhere when a common tongue is not known.
As soon as the swiftness wore off, to the clash of cymbals and cries outside, a glass filled to the brim with brandy suddenly appeared at our elbows and the meal had begun. It went on for several hours; endless dishes of unrecognisable delicacies. One, which appeared to be a rare preparation of chicken, turned out to be baby octopus.
The fans whirled, everyone sweated, drank too much, and expanded with festivity. At intervals we sat on the shaly balcony behind

the wiring for the coloured lights and watched the opera. By midnight there was as much drink left in half-filled glasses and discarded bottles to supply an average evening party anywhere.
Somehow we struggled home by the light of a lantern, through the palm grove and past the duck pond, through the hummocks of mud cones thrown up by the crabs and on to the sand-bar. The wind sighed in the palms and a yellow glow above a black shape showed where a junk slid silently by on the sea.
Some slim sampans passed in the creek, the water whispering and chucking under their bows. Peace seemed perfect.
Next morning the village appeared as usual as before. The opera clanged on regularly reaching its dramatic climaxes with a sudden rattle and clash and rolling of eyes. The fishing fleet came in. The dealers bargained over the heaps of octopus and sting-rays lying in the mud. Amnag hopped to look at his mangrove roots to the police station broadened over the jetty. Boxing Day was still an omen of peace and timeless custom.
The afternoon we heard that, acting on information received, the police from Singapore had stopped a truck from the village and had discovered half a ton of opium.
Perhaps that too was part of the custom.

Santa's No. One-Night Show



Saint Nicholas in Holland rides through a town on his white horse. Thousands of people, mostly children, cheer from the windows and in the streets.

Many a Canadian child, settling down in bed on Christmas Eve, will wonder anxiously — like generations of small fry before him — how Santa Claus and his reindeer can possibly circle the globe in one short night, and how he can manage to slide down the chimney of every child in the world in the few hours between stocking hanging and wake-up time.

Junior Canada, as well as answerless parents, can relax. Santa's task isn't quite so formidable as it seems. This jolly old saint who gladdens the heart of children at the Yule season is a creature of many guises, and his is not a one-night show. He has, in fact, from December 6 to January 6 to make his benevolent rounds. Among the children visited by the gift-giver are the youngsters of Holland and Belgium. They reach their peak of excitement in the first few days of December, in anticipation of the feast day of St. Nicholas.

The saint himself arrives on the eve of the day, and showing himself in his red bishop's robe and mitre, checks in person the conductor of each child during the foregoing year.

His arrival is announced by a shower of sweets on a clean sheet that has previously been spread in readiness upon the floor. As the children scramble for the treats, he enters, accompanied by his little servant, Black Pete, who holds a sack and a rod for the naughty.

After delivering warnings or praises, according to the individual, Santa takes his leave, promising to return when infant eyes are closed fast in sleep.

This he does leaving gifts in the wooden shoes that have been set out carefully on window sill or hearthstone, and taking care to remove the straw and carrots that thoughtful children have left in their footwear for St. Nick's hungry white horse.

In France, too, gifts are left in shoes, except in this country it is Petite Noel (the Christ Child), or Bonhomme Noel (Father Christmas) who rewards deserving little ones. In the small villages children carry little candle-lighted creches through the streets singing carols and collecting pennies.

Children's processions are an important feature of the Christmas celebration in Romania, too. From December 24 through the 31st, they march in the daytime bearing on a high pole a six-pointed star and tinkling bells, and in the evening go about singing greetings, carrying long bags with which to receive gifts.

In Italy, pre-Christmas activities include much reciting of small poems or little speeches by youngsters. They join with their elders in the observance of the Holy Festival, which begins with the booming of a cannon at sunset on Christmas Eve.

After prayers, their fast is broken with a banquet, following which

Games For All Make Christmas

Christmas is the time for family get-togethers. One of the best ways to make these gatherings memorable for all concerned is to engage in games which the whole group can play.

A nice one to start off with would be a Sugar Plum Hunt. Have one member of the family hide Christmas candies ahead of time in various nooks and corners around the house. At a given signal everyone starts hunting and gathering the pieces. The one who gathers the greatest number would be given a prize.

The Christmas Puzzle is another good one to get things going. Look through some magazines, which are filled with pictures of Santa Claus at this time of year. Cut out enough of these to go around, paste them on stiff cardboard, and cut them into pieces. Then put each group of pieces in a separate paper bag. At the signal, everyone opens a bag and starts putting the puzzle together.

The Xmas Scramble Contest is good for a group with older children in it. This is simply a contest to see who can unscramble a group of words the fastest. Just for fun. See if you can work out the following — astna, erirenden, ehsgl, dynca, gosknict, erte, trepahl, hupne, alsorc, and niborb.

Tears On The Mistletoe

We all know that in the very distant past, mistletoe was worshipped by the Druids. It was cut with golden knives and hung outside the home of each Druid to keep away evil spirits, and all marriages were sealed under its charm. But that is only one legend attaching to mistletoe. There are others.

One comes from Scandinavia and would have us believe that when Balder, the God of Poetry, was killed by an arrow cut from the mistletoe, his mother, the goddess

Boxing Day 1908 was aptly named, for on that day one of the most historic boxing matches was staged at Rushcutters Bay, Sydney, Australia, in an open air ring. It was for the world heavy weight championship, Jack Johnson, the giant American negro, took the title from the 5-foot 7-inch Tommy Burns, who was giving away several inches and more than a stone. Police stopped the bout in the 14th round to save Burns from needless punishment from the utterly ruthless Johnson. It was the only world boxing title fight ever to be held on Boxing Day.

CHRISTMAS JOYS
It's the little things at Christmas That make the day worth while. The holly at the window. A neighbor's friendly smile.

The smell of turkey in the house. The postman at the door. The children's talk of Santa Claus. The parcels on the floor. The story of a little Child Who in a manger lay: The joyous chime of Christmas bells, All these make Christmas Day. —RUTH HURST.



Our entire staff wishes you all the blessings of this holy season and joy and happiness in the years to come . . .

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