The "Christmas" Before Christmas

By JOHN BALDER

"Peace on earth; goodwill toward men".

The promise of Christmas is older than Christmas itself.

The Roman Saturnalia coincided almost exactly with the modern Christmas season — in spirit as well as in date.

For seven days from December 17 until December 23 no wars could be declared. Masters waited upon their slaves.

Shops were closed and no public or private business could be transacted.

Celebrations were continuous.

The Romans decorated trees with candles, presents were distributed to children, yule logs were burned in homes and in public places.

The feasts were dedicated to the god Saturn whose name was derived from the Latin verb serere, to sow, and who presided over agriculture and light.

The story was that Saturn came to earth in the form of a man in a golden age before even Rome was founded.

It was he who taught the Romans the arts of agriculture and settled the nomads in communities.

In that golden age under the rule of the god, all men were equal, no wars were fought, and there was justice for all.

In the end, Saturn ascended into heaven to live again with his brother gods and a temple was erected to him on the site below the Capitol where Rome was eventually built.

Men and — to judge by the state of Roman religion at the time when the history books begin — gods had subsequently degenerated. But the Romans set aside first a day in each year and later, under Augustus, a full week in which they endeavored to live in a way of which Saturn would have approved.

From time to time there were disputes about the form the celebration should take. Greek and Roman religions had merged and some of the Orphic texts demanded sacrifices to Saturn. The form the sacrifices were to take was described by a Greek word which might mean either "lights" or "men". One party believed that human sacrifices were prudent but a majority of priests sensibly decided that "lights" were the better interpretation.

Hence the candles and the yule logs.

Since Saturn was also directly the god of agriculture, the candles were placed on trees, a custom perpetuated in the modern Christmas tree.

Roman candles — a showy kind of firework — were another offshoot of this custom.

Blazing bonfires were also part of the ceremonies though these seem to derive from the even more ancient feast given to Sol the sun god at the time of the winter solstice. (The word for this in Latin was Burmalia and a merging of this with Saturn produced the word Saturnalia).

Small wax dolls were made for the occasion and given to every child, tucked into tiny cribs packed with straw — very like the images of Christ in the manger that are traditional at Christmas in many countries of Western Europe.

Their origin appears obscure, but it, too, is probably to be found in the tradition of the old Sol rites with their promise of the annual re-birth of the world with the return of the sun as the days began to get longer.

Later, under the dissolute, depraved Emperor Caligula, the celebration tended to degenerate into a week long orgy which often ended in riots and chaos.

The complete paralysis of government and business did not matter too much in the days when Rome was hardly more than a city state. But in the days of a far flung empire, it tended to be disastrous.

Saturnalia became synonymous with drunken revelry.

For that reason, the early fathers of the Church were reluctant to establish Christmas as a feast which might end up the same way. Indeed, for more than three hundred years they held out against any general rejoicing over the birth of Christ.

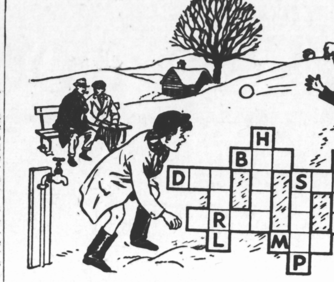
But the Saturnalia never died and when, eventually, the Church decided to elevate Christmas to the status of an official feast the timing of the Saturnalia was certainly one of the factors which influenced the choice of a date.

No one — then or now — was or is very sure about the date of Christ's birth and the elaborate theories concocted by early theologians to "prove" one date or another were not particularly convincing.

The opportunity to take over a pagan feast and Christianize it was too good to pass up. The feeling was reinforced by the fact that the Church fathers were perfectly well aware of the original noble spirit of the Saturnalia and hoped that they could revive it.

Now the merger is so complete that few people ever bother to sort out the Christian elements in the Christmas celebration from the earlier pagan strands.

The altar of Saturn lies in ruins now; but his spirit lives on.



DO YOU SEE WHAT WE SEE

Name the objects seen in the picture, and write the names in the squares.

Solutions: Across: Boy, Dog, Snow, Tree, Sheep, Boot. Down: Girl, House, Tap, Men.

Where's Daddy? Letter For Larry

By DANIEL F. LINDSAY

Kally O'Neil walked slowly up the front steps. Her mother watched her from behind the curtain. Being five years old and having a problem had her near tears. She reached up on tip toes and opened the door.

"Kally, honey. Come in here a minute." Kally pushed the hood of her snow suit back and went into the living room.

"What do you want, Mommie", She shook her blonde curls free.

"Oh, nothing much," her mother smiled. "I just want to know why my little girl looks so sad?"

"Well, Mommie," she slipped her coat off, "it's that girl down the street."

"Yes, dear, what about her?"

Kally could stand it no longer. She burst into tears and running over laid her head on her mother's lap. "That girl says" she sobbed, "that there isn't any Santa Claus."

"Well, now" her mother leaned down and gently bit the tip of her ear, "who'd ever believe a tale like that?"

"You don't believe her?"

"Of course not," she smiled down into the worried blue eyes "We know there's a Santa Claus."

"B-but she said Daddy was him."

"Oh pooh. Sit down there on the floor and I'll help you get your snow pants off."

"We could ask Daddy,"Kally suggested.

"Yes, we could," she had an inspiration. "Better still we can wait until tomorrow night and see for ourselves."

"We can?" she sat up in surprise.

"Sure. You go to bed just like always, then when he comes I'll wake you up."

She got up from the floor all excited. "You mean we can peek?"

"That's just what we'll do."

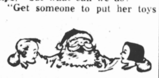
"George," she turned to her husband that evening after Kally had been put to bed "our daughter has quite a problem."

"Women always have problems." he smiled over his newspaper. "What is it this time?"

"She knows about Santa."

"That's too bad," he pursed his lips, "but what can we do?"

"Get someone to put her toys under the tree while she watches."



"Sure," he laid the paper down, "why couldn't I do it?"

"She heard that you are Santa."

He chuckled. "She isn't the only woman in the family who thinks that."

"How about Bob Perkins?" she ignored his attempt at humor. "He's the right build."

"Okay," he agreed, "I'll arrange it in the morning."

"Kally," her mother shook her gently, "Santa is downstairs."

"He is?" she sat up rubbing her eyes. "HE IS?!"

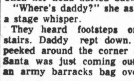
"Okay," she slipped out of bed and into her slippers. In the early morning light she looked like a tiny blond elf.

"Put on your robe."

She got it and took her mother's hand. They crept down the stairs. Mommie held her back while she made sure Santa was not smoking a cigar. He was placing gifts around the tree. She motioned her to look. Kally peeked around the corner with big eyes. Then her head darted back.

"Where's daddy?" she asked in a stage whisper.

They heard footsteps on the stairs. Daddy crept down. Kally peeked around the corner again. Santa was just coming out with an army barracks bag over his



shoulder. The three of them ran and hid behind the staircase. As soon as the front door slammed Kally was up the steps like a shot.

"Hey Sweetheart," Daddy called after her, "he left the toys in the living room." He stopped as he heard his wife's laughter."

"What's the matter with her?" he glared at her suspiciously. "Doesn't she like the little tike?"

"I'm afraid, dear, that you'll never understand the feminine mind."

"What do you mean. . . where's she going?"

"To get her coat."

"Her coat. . . why?"

"She's going down the street to tell the little girl that she's all wet. 'Because she has just seen Santa in her front room."

JUMBO'S DREAM

Here is a picture to paint. Jumbo dreamt that he hung his trunk up as a stocking and all the birds and animals in the zoo came along and filled it with buns.

Answers To Quiz

1. Nehru of India; Nkruma of Ghana.
2. A hundredth part of a Yen.
3. (a) United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, (b) General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, (c) International Civil Aviation Organization.
4. June 25th, 1950.
5. No. 11, Downing Street.
7. He is leading the New Zealand contingent in the British Trans-Antarctic expedition.
8. President Eisenhower and Albert Schweitzer.
9. Radio messages were picked up from Jupiter. They indicated the presence of tremendous storms — rather like earthly thunder storms but thousands of times as strong.
10. Thor Hayardahl, the Norwegian scientist famed as leader of the Kon Tiki expedition, discovered that the Easter Islanders had a very simple system for raising the 30 ton statues. They levered them up by piling stones and earth under them. The islanders worked in 18 man teams.
11. It is the mythical paradise of sailors and vagabond craftsmen.
12. The Mindanao Deep, off the Philippines.
13. Edgar Eisenhower, one of the President's older brothers, is a lawyer.
14. The Eiffel Tower in Paris, 985 feet high, ranks third — after the Empire State Building and the Chrysler Building, both in New York.
15. The Empire State Building is 1472 feet high.
16. The Andrea Doria and the Stockholm collided in fog southeast of Nantucket, off New York. The Andrea Doria sank.
17. Sir Frank Whittle.
18. Lord Rutherford who directed the first atom splitting job but said that the process had no practical application.
19. (a) Dr. Watson, (b) Cleopatra, (c) Sancho Panza.
20. Immanuel Kant who, throughout his life, never varied his afternoon stroll through Konibsberg.

STAGE AND SCREEN

21. Titus Andronicus.
22. (c) 26.
23. Around the World in 80 Days.
24. Hong Kong.
25. The Wayward Bus.
26. Twelve Angry Men.
27. King Lear, in 1955.
28. The Prince and the Showgirl.
29. A Streetcar Named Desire and Cat on a Hot Tin Roof.
30. Rose Tattoo.
31. St. James's Theatre. It was proposed to pull this theatre down and build a block of offices on the site. Vivien Leigh protested in the House of Lords.
32. Arthur Miller.
33. The Method. It is taught at the Actors' Studio in New York.
34. Otherwise known as the Todd-AO process, this is a method of filming and projecting motion pictures. Film 65 mm. wide is used, and the images are projected on a 65 ft. wide screen, having a curvature 13 ft. deep. It was developed by the American Optical company under the original sponsorship of Michael Todd.
35. Victor Borge.
36. Jean Seberg.
37. Silk Stockings.
38. Pygmalion; My Fair Lady.
39. Joe Pasternak. Among the stars he discovered: Gloria Swanson, Deanna Durbin, Mario Lanza. He also persuaded such artistes as Stokowski, Melchior and Iturbi to appear on film.
40. The actor, James Dean. The artist, John Minton.

LITERATURE AND ART

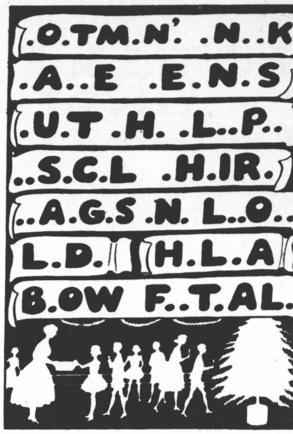
41. Christ in Majesty, at Llandaff Cathedral, Glamorgan.
42. Toulouse-Lautrec.
43. Gloriana.
44. Aida.
45. George Bernard Shaw.
46. Ulanova.
47. Joyce Carey.
48. Grandma Moses.
49. Peter and the Wolf.
50. Beer advertising; Television paid for by the viewer with a metering device; A writer and producer of TV shows.
51. Robert Burns' "Tam o' Shanter" (the headgear). The ship is the "Cutty Sark", named after the witch in the poem.
52. William Hogarth.
53. Francoise Sagan.
54. A leap during which the dancer brings his heels together.
55. Leftover Time to Kill.
56. Bolero, by Ravel.
57. The Salinas Valley in California is both Steinbeck's home and the background of most of his stories.
58. Stephen Leacock.
59. (a) 1200.
60. Monsignor Ronald Knox.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

61. (b) 2,500,000.
62. The Nazi plan for the invasion of Britain in 1940. It was called off after the defeat of the Luftwaffe by the RAF in the Battle of Britain.
63. In the Antarctic where the world's fourth highest active volcano (Mount Erebus, 13,000 feet) might erupt on you.
64. George Canning whose term lasted only four months from April 30, 1827 until September 8.
65. John Adams, the second President, was 90 when he died on Independence Day (July 4), 1826.
66. (a) England, (b) Switzerland, (c) Scotland, (d) Australia.
67. The land surrounding the Dead Sea, 1290 feet below sea level.
68. Engels.
69. Generals Robert E. Lee and George G. Meade.
70. Monaco has 20,000 people in a half square mile. Nearest rival is Gibraltar whose population, spread over two square miles, is 25,000.
71. The late Senator Joseph McCarthy. The famous "57 names" were supposed to be those of Communists in the State Department. It was with that speech that McCarthy launched his "witch hunt".
72. Written by Rouget de Lisle, it was first used as a marching song of the French Revolution by the people of Marseilles.
73. The British; reputedly by Napoleon.
74. Arthur Henderson and Austin Chamberlain were the two British Foreign Secretaries. Cordell Hull and George Marshall, the American.
75. The Mississippi.
76. The Grand Chaco, nearly half a million square miles of wilderness which was also claimed by Bolivia. Argentina and Brazil were also involved on the Bolivian side in the war which ended unsettled in 1870.
77. The highest waterfall, 3212 feet, is Angel Falls in Venezuela.
78. Mussolini was a blacksmith. Stalin, curiously, was a theological student.
79. Four (not including England and Russia): Holland, Germany, Poland, and Lithuania.
80. Tokyo with a population of 8,224,000 is pushing the top two hard.

SPORT

81. (a) Cricket, (b) baseball, (c) Lawn Tennis, (d) Yachting.
82. Golf — an eagle is two shots under bogey, a birdie is one shot under.
83. Jess Willard, 6 ft. 6½ in.
84. Tommy Burns, 5 ft. 7½ in.
85. Louise Brough.
86. India; Hockey.
87. Egyptian, Pakistani, Danish, Irish.
88. Jean Borotra, Rene Lacoste, Henri Cochet.
89. (a) Joe Louis, (b) Jack Dempsey, (c) Primo Carnera.
90. (a) Yachting, (b) Rowing, (c) Rugby.
91. In 1908, at Sydney, when Jack Johnson beat Tommy Burns.
92. 1933. When Carnera defeated Paulino Uzcudun in Rome.
93. Fanny Blankers-Koen, of Holland.
94. Cross-country running, fencing, horse-riding, shooting, and swimming.
95. Capt. Matthew Webb.
96. Roger Bannister became the first man in the world to run a mile in less than four minutes.
97. 334 by Don Bradman against England at Leeds in 1930.
98. James J. Corbett won the world heavyweight boxing title from John L. Sullivan.
99. (a) United States, (b) Canada.
100. Fred Perry.



NAME THREE GAMES

By putting the right letters in place of the dots you will find eight games which are played indoors at Christmastime.

Solutions: Postman's Knock, Table Tennis, Hunt The Slipper, Musical Chairs, Oranges and Lemons, Ludo, Halma, Blow Football.

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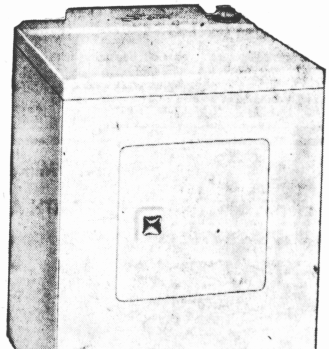

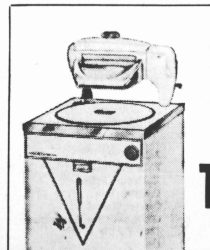

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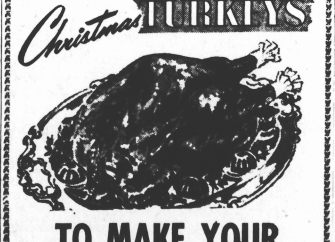
Christmas TURKEYS



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