

History of Christmas



[Christmas Customs and Traditions, Their History and Significance](#) (1976; 399 pp.)

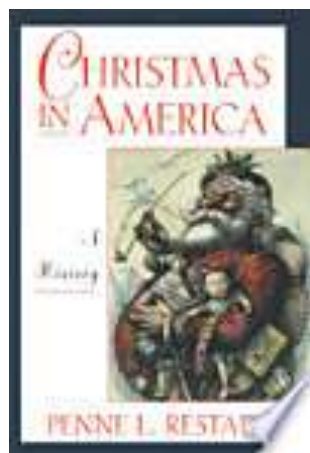
by Clement A. Miles - Reprints the 1912 study of the origins, evolution, and meaning of Christmas rituals, and practices of many nations, including caroling, Christmas drama, the manger, the Christmas tree, the Yule log, and the twelve days. SEE online: [Christmas in Ritual and Tradition](#) >



Did you know that the custom of Christmas card sending only became widespread in the late 1800s? That Christmas carols were first composed in the fourth century? That certain Christmas customs, many still practiced in the early twentieth century, may have derived from that darkest of religious rites, human sacrifice? That beyond Christmas Day, even beyond the twelve days of Christmas, there is a whole season of traditional celebrations with many interconnections, a comprehensive account of Christmas customs and

traditions in both their pagan and Christian aspects. Tracing the pagan survivals in holiday practices associated with not just Christmas but also the entire holiday season from All Saints Day to Epiphany.

[Christmas: A Candid History](#) (2007; 179 pp.) by Bruce David Forbes, forthright, accessible, informative and interesting account of the evolution of Christmas customs and celebrations. Written for everyone who loves and is simultaneously driven crazy by the holiday season, Christmas: A Candid History provides an enlightening, entertaining perspective on how the annual Yuletide celebration got to be what it is today. In a fascinating, concise tour through history, the book tells the story of Christmas—from its pre-Christian roots, through the birth of Jesus, to the holiday's spread across Europe into the Americas and beyond, and to its mind-boggling transformation through modern consumerism. Packed with intriguing stories, based on research into myriad sources, full of insights, the book explores the historical origins of traditions including Santa, the reindeer, gift giving, the Christmas tree, Christmas songs and movies, and more.



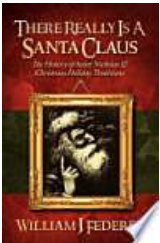
[Christmas in America: A History](#) (1996; 219 pp.) by Penne L. Restad. The manger or Macy's? Americans might well wonder ... as they take part each year in a mix of churchgoing, shopping, and family togetherness. As Restad reveals, it has always been an ambiguous meld of sacred thoughts and worldly actions—as well as a fascinating reflection of our changing society. Restad brilliantly captures the rise and transformation of our most universal national holiday. In colonial times, it was celebrated either as an utterly solemn or a wildly social event—if it was celebrated at all. Virginians hunted, danced, and feasted. City dwellers flooded the streets in raucous demonstrations. Puritan New Englanders denounced the whole affair. Restad shows that as times changed, Christmas changed—and grew in popularity. In the early 1800s, New York served as an epicenter of the newly emerging holiday, drawing on its roots as a Dutch colony (St. Nicholas was particularly popular in the Netherlands, even after the

Reformation), and aided by such men as Washington Irving. In 1822, another New Yorker named Clement Clarke Moore penned a poem now known as “’Twas the Night Before Christmas,” virtually inventing the modern Santa Claus. Well-to-do townspeople displayed a German novelty, the decorated fir tree, in their parlors; an enterprising printer discovered the money to be made from Christmas cards; and a hodgepodge of year-end celebrations began to coalesce around December 25 and the figure of Santa. The homecoming significance of the holiday increased with the Civil War, and by the end of the nineteenth century a full-fledged national holiday had materialized, forged out of borrowed and invented custom alike, and driven by a passion for gift-giving. In the twentieth century, Christmas seeped into every niche of our conscious and unconscious lives to become a festival of epic proportions.



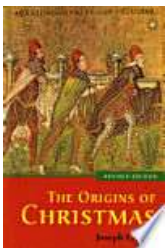
[The Case for Christmas: A Journalist Investigates the Identity of the Child in the Manger](#) (2005 & 2025; 99 pp.) by Lee Strobel, Who was in the manger that first Christmas morning? And how can we know for sure? Award-winning legal journalist Lee Strobel tells us that somewhere beyond the traditions of the holiday lies the truth. Some say that newborn baby would become a great moral leader or social critic or a profound philosopher, a rabbi, a feminist, a prophet, and more. Many are convinced he was the divine Son of God. But who was he really? Consulting experts on the Bible, archaeology, and messianic prophecy, Strobel searches out the true identity of the child in the manger, analyzing: Eyewitness Evidence—Can the biographies of Jesus be trusted? Scientific Evidence—What does archaeology reveal? Profile Evidence—Did Jesus fulfill the attributes of God? Fingerprint Evidence—Did Jesus uniquely match the identity of the Messiah? Strobel invites you to push past the distractions of the season and come into the presence of the baby who was born to change your life and rewrite your eternal destination: the greatest gift of all.

[A Visual History of Christmas](#) (2019; 379 pp.) by Darren Shupe. This follows the evolution of Christmas traditions from ancient times to modern days. A Visual History of Christmas follows the evolution of Christmas traditions from ancient times to modern days. From the sacred plants of the pagans that developed into decorations of Christian homes, to Christmas hymns and carols, to the creation of European Christmas markets, to the beginning of Saint Nicholas and his eventual transformation into Santa Claus, and finally to the celebration of Christmas Day itself, A Visual History Of Christmas takes the reader on a tour of Christmas history that begins in the middle east and journeys to Europe, and to North America. Each chapter begins with a concise historical overview, followed by vintage artwork.



[There Really is a Santa Claus - History of Saint Nicholas & Christmas Holiday Traditions, Includes U.S. Presidents' Christmas Addresses](#) (2002; 300 pp.) by William J. Federer, Read the story of Nicholas, 3rd Century Bishop of Myra, Asia Minor (present day Turkey) and how over time stories of his holy, generous life were embellished into legend. Discover additions of writer Washington Irving, minister Clement Moore, Civil War illustrator Thomas Nast, Coca-Cola artist Haddon Sundblom. Explore fascinating origins of the 12 Days of Christmas, Christmas Tree, Carols, Kris Kringle, Creche' scene, Poinsettia, Hanukkah.

[Christmas: A Short History from Solstice to Santa](#) (2019; 144 pp.) by Andy Thomas, Covering ancient ceremonies, mythology, the gospels, and traditions from around the world, this book uncovers the fascinating background to one of the biggest festive seasons—Christmas. Learn about the astrological associations, the Nativity, excesses of the Roman festival of Saturnalia, the Puritan ban of Christmas, the rise of gift-giving, origins of Santa Claus, food and traditions from around the world, and history of its stories, songs and symbols.



[The Origins of Christmas](#) (2014; 184 pp.) by Joseph F. Kelly, And who was the real Saint Nicholas? When was Christmas first celebrated? How did December 25 become the date for the feast? How did the Bible's "magi from the East" become three kings named Melchior, Caspar, and Balthasar who rode camels to worship the newborn Christ? How did the Feast of the Nativity generate an entire liturgical season from Advent to Candlemas? Why did medieval and Renaissance artists portray Joseph as an old man? When did the first Christmas music appear? Real Saint Nicholas?

[Stories Behind the Great Traditions of Christmas: Discovering the History of Our Favorite Christmas Celebrations](#) (2010; 208 pp.) by Ace Collins, Enhance your holiday celebrations as you discover the real story behind some of your most beloved Christmas customs and how they all point to Christ.



[Toward the Origins of Christmas](#) (1995; 296 pp.) by Susan K. Roll, presents an investigation of the patristic texts citing liturgical scholars in the late 19th and 20th centuries to support two main theories: the Calculation theory and the History of Religions theory. This historical research is set in the framework of the contemporary experience of Christmas: the dynamics of time and the liturgical year, the inculturation of liturgy, the underlying elements of dualism, and the patriarchal power paradigms which linger beneath the often commercial and sentimental character of Christmas today.

[Christmas: Its History and Meaning](#) (2006; 112 pp.) by James A. Fowler, he considers the historical background of Jesus' incarnation, the theological implications of "the Word became flesh," the cultural origins of modern Christmas celebrations, and the personal.

