

Things about Xmas that may be of interest:

From the Ken Collins web-site.

The abbreviation of Xmas for Christmas is not irreligious. The first letter of the word Christ in Greek is chi, which is identical to our X. Xmas was originally an ecclesiastical abbreviation that was used in tables and charts. In the early days of printing, when font sizes were limited and type was set by hand, abbreviations and ditto marks were used liberally. Xmas came into general use from the church!

Here are my crackpot ramblings, which you may hold up to ridicule this Yuletide season. Or perhaps you will discern a deeper wisdom in my sound and fury. In any event, you will be entertained, and possibly informed.

In the beginning

The cross so overshadowed the manger-and the resurrection so overshadowed the incarnation-that neither scripture nor tradition has passed down a firm date for Christmas.

The origin of the date

There is a very widespread theory that Christmas began in Rome as a response to pagan festivities centering around the winter solstice, which was locally considered to be 25 December. The pagan celebration, which was first established by the Roman emperor Aurelian in AD 274, was called *The Birth of the Invincible Sun*. However, there is evidence that, some years earlier, Christians had made a sincere attempt to calculate the actual date of Jesus' birthday. People commonly believe that Christmas was instituted on the date of a pagan holiday to supplant it, but it was actually the other way around. Christmas was there first.

In ancient Judaism, there was a common belief, which ancient Christians inherited, that the prophets of Israel died on the on the same date as their birth or conception. This may be behind the long-standing Christian custom of referring to the date of a martyr's death as their "birthday in heaven." According to ancient western calculations, Jesus was crucified on 25 March, so they assumed that 25 March was the date of Jesus' conception. The Annunciation is still commemorated on that date to this day. Nine months after 25 March leads to 25 December, which would be the birthday of Jesus Christ if all those assumptions and calculations were correct. They aren't correct, but the fact remains that the date has a Christian origin.

In AD 354, Philocalus wrote a Christian martyrology that dates the nativity of Jesus Christ on December 25, and cites an earlier work as backup. From this we can deduce that Christmas was celebrated on the present date at least as early as AD 335 in Rome.

The origin of our present celebration

Christmas failed to gain prominent or even universal recognition among Christians until quite recently. In some protestant-dominated areas, such as the Massachusetts Bay Colony, the celebration of Christmas was even legally banned, probably as part of their rejection of those parts of the traditional liturgical calendar that have no apparent foundation in Scripture. As late as the last century, Christmas had gained no great importance; it was not even a legal holiday. This explains why nineteenth-century readers found it credible that Scrooge could require Cratchit to come to work on Christmas Day and why in the nineteenth century the US Congress could meet on Christmas Day.

My Comment:

If Christmas happens to be on a pagan god's day Satan must be pretty mad that Jesus has stolen it, so I say, let celebrate it because every day belongs to Him anyway --- He's the victor.

Subscribe for my newsletter free.

Your Subscription: