

CHRISTMAS IN THE COLONIES

In "Christmas in Colonial America", the World Book editors write, "A traveler going back in time to the Colonial era in America would assuredly find some familiar customs, but the visitor would discover many more missing. Today the Christmas tree enjoys a central role in the Yuletide pageantry. Although a few trees were festooned with baubles in early America, the idea of a decorated tree did not really become popular until the late 1800's. Except for the lucky Dutch children of New Amsterdam, there were few presents exchanged. And even though Christmas was celebrated by most of the inhabitants of the new land, it was not an official holiday. At Monticello, Thomas Jefferson would make a brief religious note of the day and then go to work in his study."