Where Christmas Decorations Came From



Candle: The Inn LUCIA, the "Queen of Lights," is honored each year in Sweden on Dec. 13. Her appearance is seen as symbolizing the return of light after dark days. In Norway, lighted candles are carried through the borin and into the stable by the farmer who sings and makes the sign of the cross in the hier of the cattle to ensure good fortune and health during the 'coming year. The candle was a symbol of welcome for Mary and Joseph as they sought shelter in vair. And so the Irish set a lighted candle on the table and leave the door unlatched, thus extending hospitality to travelers on the road. The Danes also light candles to show possing strangers there is food and shelter available. Universally, the candle specks out to strangers that there is room in the inn.

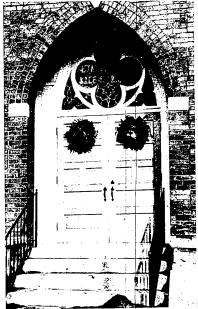


Pinata: Mexico, Spain CHRISTMAS IN MEXICO is spelled with a capital P which stands for posados, pinatos and puestos. The pinato is an eartherware jar cleverly disguised as an animal, It is filled with toys and good things to eat and must be broken to redeem the treasures inside. Blindfolded children armed with sticks have great fun trying to break the pinato which hongs from the branch of a tree. The custom started centuries ago in Spain.

CREDITS Model with condle is Gale Palawrak, 8. Creche : at Heeney-Sundquist Funeral Home. Pinata came from El Nibble Nook réstaurant. The wreath is on the door of Solem United Church of Christ, Farmington.



The Creche: St. Francis IN EARLY FRANCE a live infant would be placed on the hay of the creche during the Mass. In Provence, for a century and a half, the tiny clay ligures were made by village aritisms who labored throughout the year and then sold the "little saints" of great Christmas fairs. The crattmen mode ligures resembling residents of their own village - the kaife grinder, wosherwomn, gypsy, thief, town crier, etc. The creches of Peru, prime targets for collectors, are unique because Mary is shown attired in rich robes and a feathered that. Tradition stributes the origin of the creche to \$1. Francis of Assisi in the year 1223.



Wreaths: Good Cheer WESI SAXON woriors in early England burned ash branches to warm themselves at night. The English bugan a holiday custom of decking the holls with holls to dispel the gloominess of winter, bosed in part on the belief the Christ Child was first bathed and dressed by a fire of esh wood. Ale garlands were hung an in dators to show that good ale and hospitality were inside for travelers. Germans collected "Me" and "She" holly leaves, so aamed by the presence or absence of prickles on a leaf. Whichever kind was gathered in greatest quantity would determine who would rathe household during the coming year. The Japanese clas hang wereths and doors, but these are made of ropes of twisted straw and signify strong family ties,

STORY: Emory Daniels PICTURES: Fran Evert

