

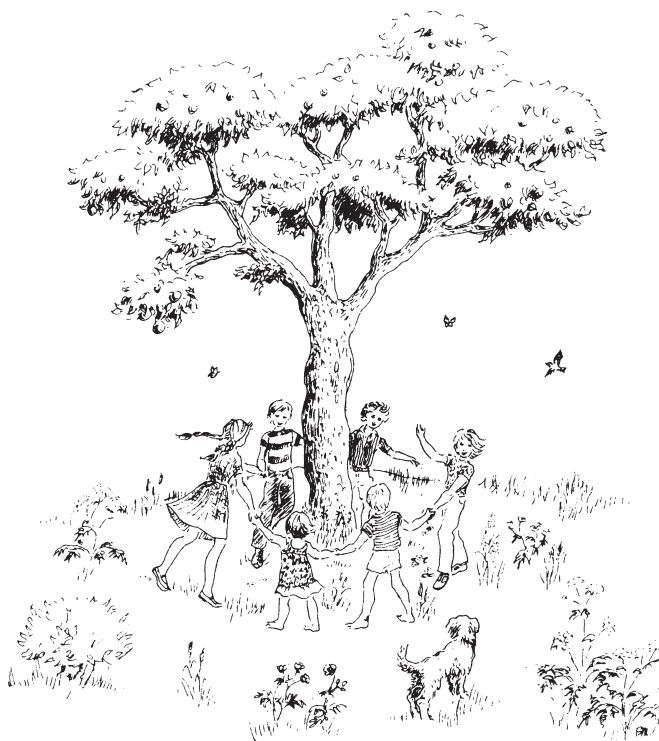
# **FESTIVALS, FAMILY AND FOOD**

Guide to seasonal celebration

**Diana Carey and Judy Large**

Illustrations by Cornelia Morris and Sylvia Mehta

Music by Rob Mehta



## **DEDICATION**

For our children and others, who reminded us of what the seasons can mean

**Hawthorn Press**

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# Foreword

Medieval calendar woodcuts often illustrated the months of the year according to seasonal tasks. The following text is a typical portrayal of the year, which could also be chanted by children of the past while they acted out the stated activities in rhythmical fashion.

*January*

By this fire I warm my hands;

*February*

And with my spade I delve my lands.

*March*

Here I set my seeds to spring;

*April*

And here I hear the birds sing.

*May*

I am light as bird in the tree top;

*June*

And I take pains to weed my crop.

*July*

With my scythe my mead I mow;

*August*

And here I shear my corn full low.

*September*

With my flail I earn my bread;

*October*

And here I sow my wheat so red.

*November*

At Martinmas I kill my swine;

*December*

And at Christmas I drink red wine



In stark contrast, a friend spoke with us recently about feeling lost in today's 'instant' society. Few of us today follow the full cycle from spade and seed to bread. If we so wish, we may have strawberries for tea in January, courtesy of frozen foods. Meals needn't take any actual process of preparation; with a tin or a packet something to eat can be ready in minutes. Cakes and biscuits are available ready-baked or in convenient mixes. Indeed, 'convenience' is a commercial catchword. Some feel that major holidays are also in a commercial domain, with Christmas decorations in the shops so rapidly followed by Easter ones that the themes become superficial and any meaning, lost.

We are a mobile society; we move away from immediate family, perhaps changing home or work-place every few years, and have new or changing standards and expectations in relationships. Ideally all of these changes mean that we are no longer tied to our environment as past generations were. We can better fulfill individuality and make free choices. This is the ideal. But being tied to the environment and natural seasonal cycle of life is not the same as being in touch with it. It may be that we still need the latter.

The theme of this book is a simple but bold suggestion; that if rituals and festivals have traditionally contributed to the integration and stability of communities and societies, then in the modern context they may do the same for our personal integration and for a healthy social ethos. 'Family' today may be in new forms, with single parents or single individuals joining together or with couples and their children. It has always meant people of all ages belonging together, and for many the extended family is still important. Even if we manage only once a year to gather with friends or relatives in celebration of one festival or occasion, this is time well spent.

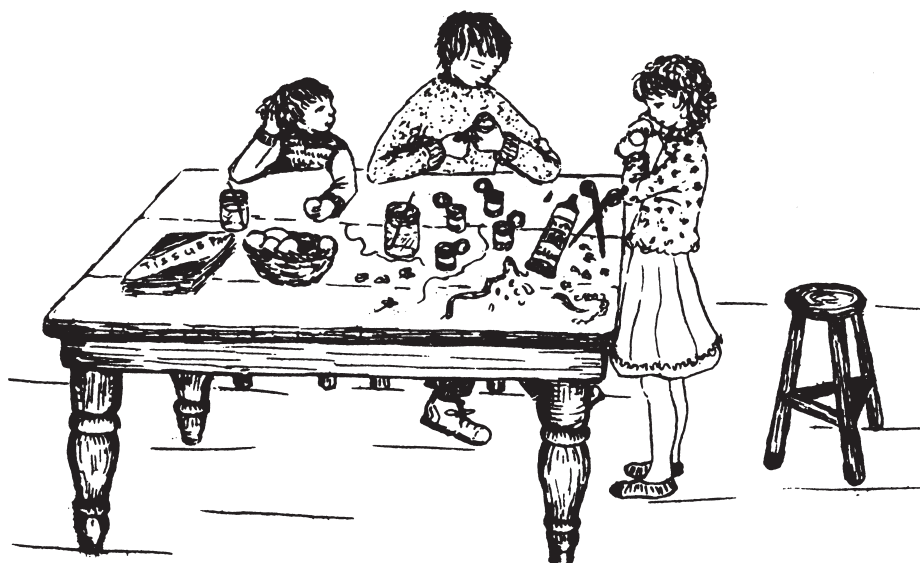
This book is for men, women and children who wish to relate to the seasons and at the same time to each other. It is written with children very much in mind, for children can remind us of nature and the wonder we might otherwise forget. We hope it will be used as a reference book according to the reader's own needs, situation, and resources. And we hope it will be enjoyed. Don't feel intimidated by the sheer volume; try a few ideas each year and gather some of your own, which can be added at the end of the book.

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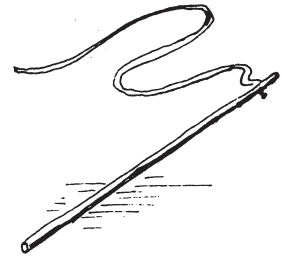


## The Calendar.

I knew when Spring was come –  
Not by the murmurous hum  
Of bees in the willow-trees,  
Or frills  
Of daffodils,  
Or the scent of the breeze;  
But because there were whips and tops  
By the jars of lollipops  
In the two little village shops.



I knew when Summer breathed –  
Not by the flowers that wreathed  
The sedge by the water's edge,  
Or gold  
Of the wold,  
Or white and rose of the hedge;  
But because, in a wooden box  
In the window at Mrs. Mock's,  
There were white-winged shuttlecocks.



I knew when Autumn came –  
Not by the crimson flame  
Of leaves that lapped the eaves  
Or mist  
In amethyst  
And opal-tinted weaves;  
But because there were alley-taws\*  
(Punctual as hips and haws)  
On the counter at Mrs. Shaw's.



I knew when Winter swirled –  
Not by the whitened world  
Or silver skeins in the lanes,  
Or frost  
That embossed  
Its patterns on window-panes:  
But because there were transfer-sheets  
By the bottles of spice and sweets  
In the shops in two little streets.

Barbara Euphan Todd

\*'alley-taws' are marbles.



## Slumber in Spring

Grey pussy-willows  
For fairy pillows,  
So soft for fairy's head;  
Cherry-petals sweet  
For a cool, clean sheet,  
Green moss for a fairy bed.  
Fragrant violet for a coverlet.  
And hush! down the hill's green sweep,  
Comes the wind's soft sigh  
For a lullaby;  
Sound, sound will a fairy sleep.

Elizabeth Gould

## Spring is Coming Song

*Spring is coming, Spring is coming,  
Birdies, build your nests;  
Weave together straw and feather,  
Doing each your best, doing each your best.*

*Spring is coming, Spring is coming,  
Flowers are coming too,  
Pansies, lilies, daffodilies  
Spring is nearly through, Spring is nearly through.*

*Spring is coming, Spring is coming,  
All around is fair,  
Shiver, quiver on the river  
Spring is really here, Spring is really here.*



The month it was April  
The day it was sunny,  
I plucked him a primrose  
And the moon came up like honey.



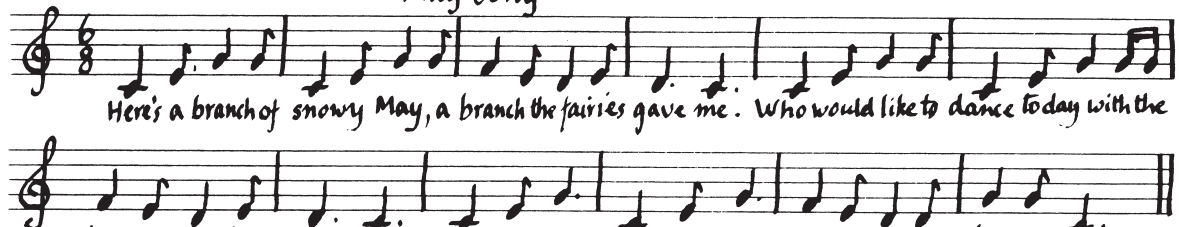
## Maypole Song

*Here's a branch of snowy may,  
A branch the fairies gave me.  
Who would like to dance today  
With the branch the fairies gave me?*

*Dance away, dance away,  
Holding high the branch of may.*

*Dance away, dance away,  
Holding high the branch of may.*

**May Song**



Here's a branch of snowy May, a branch the fairies gave me. Who would like to dance today with the  
branch the fairies gave me. Dance away, dance away, holding high the branch of May.



### 3. Picnics

#### Holiday Memory

##### *August Bank Holiday*

And if you could have listened at some of the open doors at some of the houses in the street you might have heard:

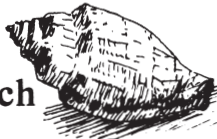
'Uncle Owen says he can't find the bottle-opener...'  
'Has he looked under the hallstand?...'  
'Willy's cut his finger ...'  
'Got your spade?'  
'If somebody doesn't kill that dog ...'  
'Uncle Owen says why should the bottle-opener be under the hallstand?'  
'Never again, never again...'  
'I know I put the pepper somewhere ...'  
'Willy's bleeding ...'  
'Oh come on, come on ....'  
'Let's have a look at the bootlace in your bucket ...'  
'If I lay my hands on that dog .....'  
'Uncle Owen's found the bottle-opener....'  
'Willy's bleeding over the cheese ...'

And the trams that hissed like ganders took us all to the beautiful beach.

There was cricket on the sand, and sand in the sponge cake, sandflies in the watercress, and foolish, mulish, religious donkeys on the unwilling trot.

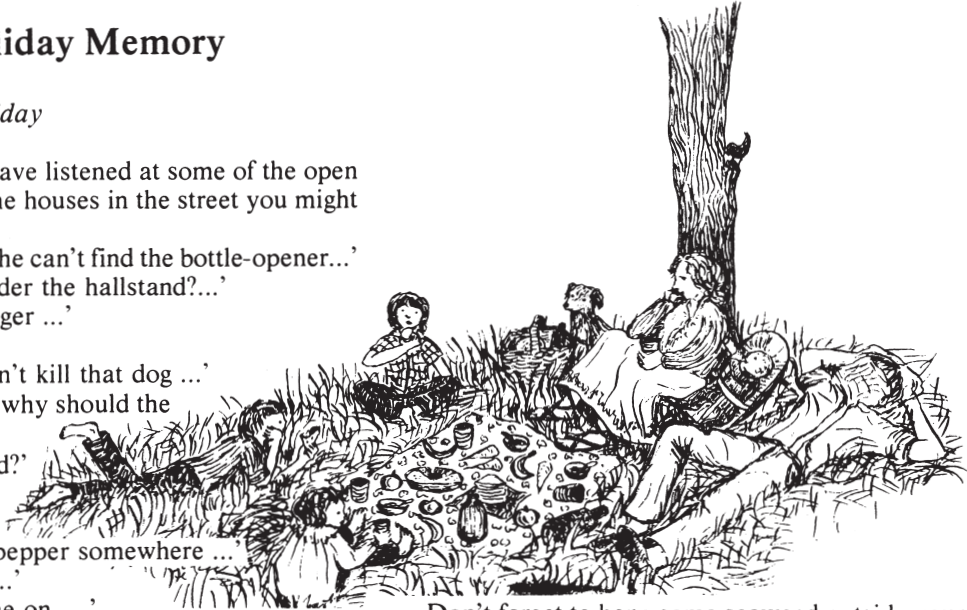
Dylan Thomas

#### On the Beach



A time for relaxing, playing games, splashing in the water and collecting things. Look out for a variety of pretty stones and shells: the large stones can be decorated with paints or pressed flowers, varnished and used as paperweights or decorative items, and the shells can be collected and later identified and spread out on the windowsill. They look very pretty in a dish of water on the table (add some salt to stop the water growing algae), or the little shells can be stuck on to boxes to make little holiday gifts for relatives.

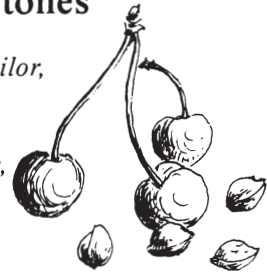
A friend once made a pretty mobile by collecting small pieces of driftwood on the beach, the shapes they made were very unusual. Bigger pieces of driftwood can be worked with linseed oil to make a pretty decorative object.



Don't forget to hang some seaweed outside your front door to tell you what the weather will do the next day. If the seaweed is wet so will the weather be, if it is dry, the day will be fine.

#### Cherry Stones

*Tinker, Tailor, Soldier, Sailor,  
Rich Man, Poor Man,  
Ploughboy, Thief -  
And what about a Cowboy,  
Policeman, Jailer,  
Engine-driver,  
Or Pirate Chief?*



*What about a Postman - or a Keeper at the Zoo?  
What about the Circus Man who lets the people  
through?  
And the man who takes the pennies for the round-  
abouts and swings?  
Or the man who plays the organ, and the other man  
who sings?  
What about a Conjuror with rabbits in his pockets?  
What about a Rocket Man who's always making  
rockets?  
Oh, there's such a lot of things to do and such a lot  
to be  
That there's always lots of cherries on my little  
cherry tree!*

A.A. Milne



## Flans

These are so useful because you can use all kinds of ingredients. Line a greased flan dish with short-crust pastry – this is quite a good one to use:

6 oz plain flour  
2-3 oz oats  
1 oz sesame seeds  
5 oz margarine or mixture of fats  
4-5 tablespoons cold water  
Pinch of salt

Cook this blind for ten minutes. 375°F (Reg. 5), and then tip in the following mixture. In a bowl mix 3 large eggs, 6 oz of good cheese (Emmenthal or Gruyere is best), ½ pt milk (and cream), a few herbs i.e. chopped chives, parsley, basil or a little mint, salt and pepper. This is the basis for the flan but to this you can add:

a layer of cooked ham or bacon;  
cooked and chopped cauliflower, carrot,  
French beans, peas, sautéed onion, leek,  
mushrooms, peppers or courgettes.

In fact it is worthwhile experimenting with what is in season.

Spread the mixture into the flan base and cook at 375°F (Reg. 5) for 30 mins, or so, until brown on top.

Instead of one large flan, try making little individual ones in patty tins: these require less cooking time.



## Pizza Flan

For this you can use the following pastry:

½ lb plain flour  
pinch salt  
1 level tablespoon icing sugar  
5 oz soft butter  
1 egg yolk  
4 tablespoons cold water

Line a greased flan dish with this pastry and prick the bottom. Allow to chill for 1 hour in fridge and then cook blind for 10 mins. 375°F (Reg. 5).

For the filling heat some olive oil in a pan and add 6-8 large tomatoes which have been peeled, chopped and drained. Add 2 tablespoons of tomato concentrate and cook until the excess moisture is evaporated and mash to form a purée. Slice 3 large onions and simmer in butter until soft and golden and add some fresh rosemary or tarragon. Combine the onion and tomato mixture and stir in 2-4 tablespoons of Parmesan or grated Emmenthal or Gruyere. Fill the pastry case and you can arrange anchovies and black olives across the top if you like these and cook for 30 mins. 375°F (Reg. 5).



## Pizza and Dough

1 lb flour  
1 oz yeast (½ oz dried yeast)  
¼-½ pt water  
1½ teaspoon salt  
3 tablespoons olive oil

Dissolve the salt in ½ pint of warm water. Put the flour in a bowl and make a well in the centre and pour in the yeast (which has been allowed to dissolve in about 2 tablespoonsful of warm water and a little sugar for 10 mins). Mix with one hand and gradually add more water with the other. It should end up elastic, springy and not too wet. Wash, dry, and flour your hands. Place the dough on a floured board and knead well, working in the olive oil, a small quantity at a time. The dough should now be pliable and not sticking to your hands – this is something you have to practise a few times. Cut into three or four pieces and make into pizza rounds and place in greased and floured tins and allow to prove for 20 mins. Then add the sauce. Alternatively put the sauce on before proving – you will have to decide which you prefer.

You need about ¾ pt. well seasoned tomato sauce as below (use tinned or fresh tomatoes).

*First*, chop 2 onions and some garlic and soften them in some oil for 10 mins. without browning. Add 1½ lbs. tomatoes skinned and roughly chopped, season and add sprigs of thyme, rosemary and a bay leaf. Simmer uncovered for 30 mins. and then remove the sprigs of herbs. If the mixture appears too runny add 2 tablespoonsful tomato concentrate.



## IV. AUTUMN DAYS

### Red in Autumn

Tipperty-toes, the smallest elf,  
Sat on a mushroom by himself,  
Playing a little tinkling tune  
Under the big round harvest moon;  
And this is the song that Tipperty made  
To sing to the little tune he played.

“Red are the hips, red are the haws,  
Red and gold are the leaves that fall,  
Red are the poppies in the corn,  
Red berries on the rowan tall;  
Red is the big round harvest moon,  
And red are my new little dancing shoon.”

Elizabeth Gould



### Harvest

Now all the farmers from far and wide  
Have gathered their bounty of countryside:  
Corn and barley from field and wold,  
Honey from beehive and wool from the fold,  
Fruit from the orchard all ripe, red and gold,  
Log for the fire to keep out the cold.

Dorothy Hancock



### Colour

The world is full of colour!  
'Tis Autumn once again  
And leaves of gold and crimson  
Are lying in the lane.

There are brown and yellow acorns,  
Berries and scarlet haws,  
Amber gorse and heather  
Purple across the moors!

Green apples in the orchard,  
Flushed by a glowing sun;  
Mellow pears and brambles  
Where coloured pheasants run!

Yellow, blue and orange,  
Russet, rose and red –  
A gaily-coloured pageant –  
An Autumn Flower bed.

Beauty of light and shadow,  
Glory of wheat and rye,  
Colour of shining water  
Under a sunset sky!

Adeline White

## Song

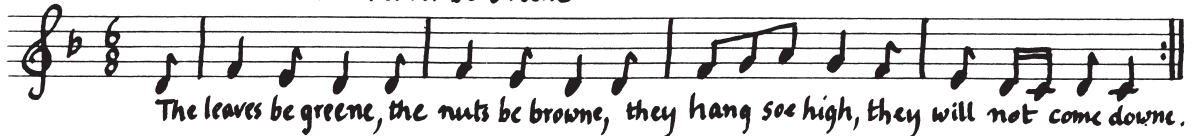
*'The leaves be greene,  
The nuts be browne,  
They hang soe high  
They will not come downe.'*



*(Can be done as a 2 person round)*

*"The Leaves be Greene"  
by the Consort of Musicke*

### The Leaves be Greene



### Autumn Leaves for Preserving

You can pick a variety of leaves which will do well when preserved – such as beech, maple, eucalyptus, hornbeam, laurel or lime. Pick branches of them when they have just turned and before the leaves start to fall.

Split the woody stems about 3" up and stand them in a bucket of warm water for a few hours. If any of the leaves curl then throw them away as they will not last.

Make a solution of glycerine and water

- 1 part glycerine
- 2 parts water

Boil this together and put the mixture about 2" deep in a container and stand the branches in this for several weeks until the glycerine solution has been soaked up. You can stand the glycerine container in a large bucket for convenience and put the branches into this to stand more safely. Now you can make decorative arrangements with the leaves.

## 7. What to do with all the apples!



*Here's to thee, good apple tree,  
Stand fast at root,  
Bear well at top,  
Every little twig  
Bear an apple big.  
Every little bough  
Bear apples now,  
Hats full! Caps full!  
Three score sacks full!  
Hurrah, boys! Hurrah!*

### *Old Roger is Dead – Ring Game*

*'Old Roger is dead, and he lies in his grave,  
Lies in his grave, lies in his grave,  
Old Roger is dead and he lies in his grave,  
Heigh ho, lies in his grave.'*

#### *Other Verses:*

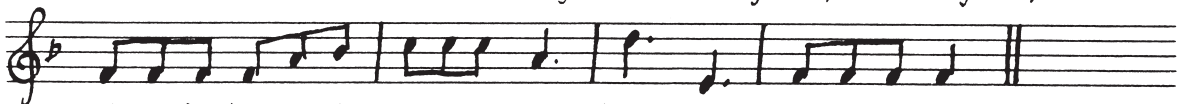
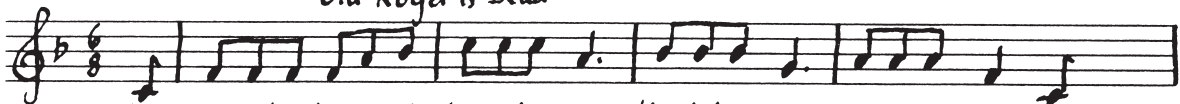
*They planted an apple tree over his head, etc.  
The apples grew ripe and they all tumbled down, etc.  
There came an old woman a picking them up, etc.  
Old Roger got up and he gave her a poke, etc.  
This made the old woman go hippety-hop, etc.*



#### *Actions:*

One child lies in the centre of the ring of children who walk round as they sing. For apple trees they raise their arms above their heads. For apples tumbling they drop their fingers with a wriggling movement. One child then pretends to pick up apples and puts them into her apron. Roger gets up and pokes her. And the old woman hops all round the ring.

#### *Old Roger is Dead*



## 7. Twelfth Night - Epiphany

On the 12th night after the birth of Jesus, the Three Kings led by a star came to Bethlehem with gifts for the Baby Jesus of gold, frankincense and myrrh. It is the end of the Christmas festive period and the time when we take down the decorations and burn the Christmas Tree.

There is a special cake to have on this evening - the French call it a Galette des Rois and given below you will find a simple version. One tradition is that hidden treasure is put inside it - the one who finds the treasure is king for the night. Treasure could be a new coin or a little charm or trinket.

Another custom is to bake the cake with a bean and a pea (dried) in the mix. The one who finds the bean is king and the one who finds the pea is queen for the night. They rule over the party, perhaps wear crowns and lead the games. (See below)

8 oz butter  
grated rind of lemon  
5 oz sifted icing sugar  
3 oz self-raising flour  
3 oz ground rice  
6 egg yolks  
3 egg whites  
extra sifted icing sugar



Cream the butter and grated lemon rind and then beat in the icing sugar. Sift the flour and ground rice together and add one third of it to the creamed mixture. Add two of the egg yolks and repeat with the remaining flour and yolks. Fold in the stiffly whisked whites and turn into a prepared tin (possibly a ring shape) and bake in oven 350°F (Reg 4) for about an hour. Then test to see if springy and cooked. Decorate with a lemon butter icing or just sifted icing sugar and decorate with little figures of the three kings or with crowns or stars.

### *Twelfth Night*

*Here's to thee, old apple tree,  
Whence thou may'st bud  
And whence thou may'st blow,  
And whence thou may'st bear apples enow;  
Hats full and caps full,  
Bushels full and sacks full,  
And our pockets full too.*

In the West Country, the tradition of blessing the apple trees took place at this time. Villagers would gather in the orchards at dusk, firing guns through the branches to drive away evil spirits and pour cider on the apple tree roots. The orchards were then toasted with mugs of hot cider and the above song was sung.

### **Twelfth Night**

Now, now the mirth comes  
With the cake full of plums  
Where Beane's the King of the sport here,  
Beside we must knowe  
The pea also  
Must revell as Queene for the night here.

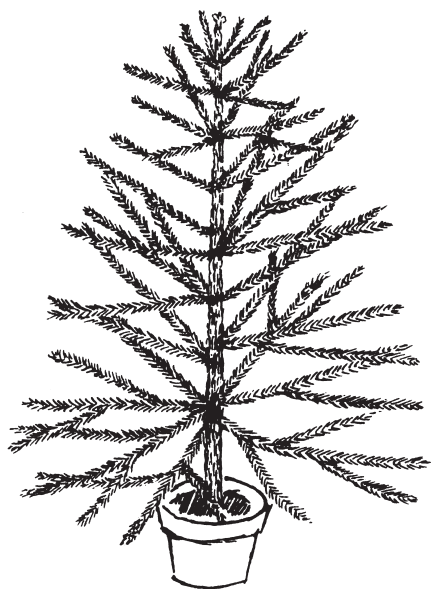
Which knowne, let us make  
Joy-sops with the cake  
And let not a man then be seen here,  
Who inurged will not drinke  
To the base from the brink  
A health to the King and the Queene here.

Next crowne the bowle full  
With gentle lamb's wooll;\*  
And sugar, nutmeg and ginger,  
With store of ale too;  
And this you must doe  
To make the wassaille a stinger.

Give then to the King,  
And the Queene wassailing:  
And though with ale ye be whet here;  
Yet part ye from hence,  
As free from offence,  
As when ye innocent met here.

Robert Herrick

\*Lamb's Wooll = spiced ale.





## VI. BIRTHDAYS

*Monday's child is fair of face  
Tuesday's child is full of grace,  
Wednesday's child knows how to sew  
Thursday's child has far to go,  
Friday's child is loving and giving  
Saturday's child works hard for a living,  
But the child that is born on the Sabbath day  
Is bonnie and blithe and good and gay!*

### *Ideas for Birthdays*

We hope that you will find the themes of the different seasons and festivals something that you can incorporate into the celebration of your child's birthday – whenever it occurs in the calendar.

But here are some other ideas, games and recipes.

### **A verse for The Night before the Birthday**

When I have said my evening prayer,  
And my clothes are folded on the chair,  
And mother switches off the light,  
I'll still be .... years old tonight.  
But, from the very break of day,  
Before the children rise and play,  
Before the darkness turns to gold  
Tomorrow, I'll be ..... years old.  
..... kisses when I wake,  
..... candles on my cake!

### **My Happiest Birthday**

I think that  
my birthday  
and Christmas  
Eve are the  
two happiest  
days in the  
whole year.

I woke  
early. I was  
still sleep-  
ing in Lars' and Pip's room, but when I woke Lars



and Pip were fast asleep. My bed creaks so I began turning round and round in bed so that the creaking would awake the boys. I could not shout to them, for whoever has a birthday must always stay asleep until they are woken. But they went on sleeping instead of getting up and giving me my birthday tray.

However, I made my bed give a really loud creak, and at last Pip sat up and began to scratch his head. Then he woke Lars and they both crept out of the room and down the stairs. I heard Mother rattling the cups in the kitchen and I could hardly lie still, I was so excited.

At last I heard footsteps on the stairs, so I shut my eyes as tightly as I could. Then - bang - the door opened and there stood Father and Mother and Lars and Pip and Agda, our maid. Mother was carrying my tray and on it I saw a cup of chocolate, a vase of flowers and a big iced cake with "Lisa 7" on it in sugar icing.

"The Six Bullerby Children" by Astrid Lindgren

Every family has their own little rituals for birthdays; in our family we always try to make a special birthday card which is a closely guarded secret.

The card doesn't have to be expertly drawn, but the children are thrilled to get them because we try to put on the card all the most notable and important things about the child over the last year. For example, a favourite pet, an enthusiasm for trains or a particular toy; things they enjoy doing like swimming or a skill they have just achieved like riding a two-wheeler.

They tend to keep these over the years and it provides them with a special record of their childhood.

A similar idea would be to collect photographs of special events over the year to give on their birthdays.



## A Birthday Place

Try to make the birthday child's place at the table special for the day by putting a candle or little bowl of flowers nearby.

For the party make a simple gold crown – perhaps incorporating something seasonal – like a little blossom or ivy – and make the birthday seat special by covering it in some material or by decorating white muslin with little gold stars and spreading this over the chair.

## Party Activities

Take the children off for a walk and give them a bag each to collect any pretty stones, mosses, fir cones, small pieces of evergreen, berries or little flowers that they find, so that they can make a miniature garden when they return. You can do this on an old tin tray or table and cover with soil, sand and moss and a piece of mirror acts as a frozen lake. You can add a few tiny figures of animals or a few model buildings to finish off the scene.

### Matchbox Game

Give each child a matchbox and ask them to go out in the garden, or indeed, you can do this indoors, with forethought, and find as many different small items as possible to fit into the boxes. The winner is the one with the most different objects: perhaps there could also be a prize for ingenuity.



*Chinese Laundry*

Hang different little bags of material on the washing line – each one containing a different smelling thing like coffee, tea, spices, herbs, moth balls, and get the children to write down as many as they can identify on a sheet of paper.

### *Beans are hot*

A simple hiding game where one player is sent out of the room and the chosen article hidden.

The one outside is then called in with the chant:-

“Hot Beans and Melted butter,

Please, my lady, (or master) come to supper.”

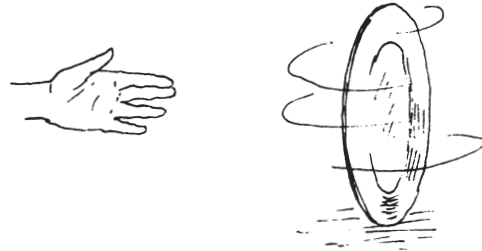
The search begins and when the finder is close, the players yell:-

“Hot Beans”

and when he is far away they call:-

“Cold Beans”.

When the article is found the next one to go outside can be chosen by drawing straws.



*Twirling the tin plate*

All the players sit in a circle with a tin plate in the middle, and each player is given a number. No. 1 goes to the centre and spins the plate on the floor. He then darts back to his place and calls out a number. The person who has that number must dash forward and prevent the plate from stopping spinning and falling on the floor. If the plate does fall the player must pay a forfeit, and if it falls on the underside the loser must pay two forfeits!

The winner is the one with the least number of forfeits at the end. Forfeits could be shoes, socks, belts, pullovers, etc.

### *Hunt the Pairs*

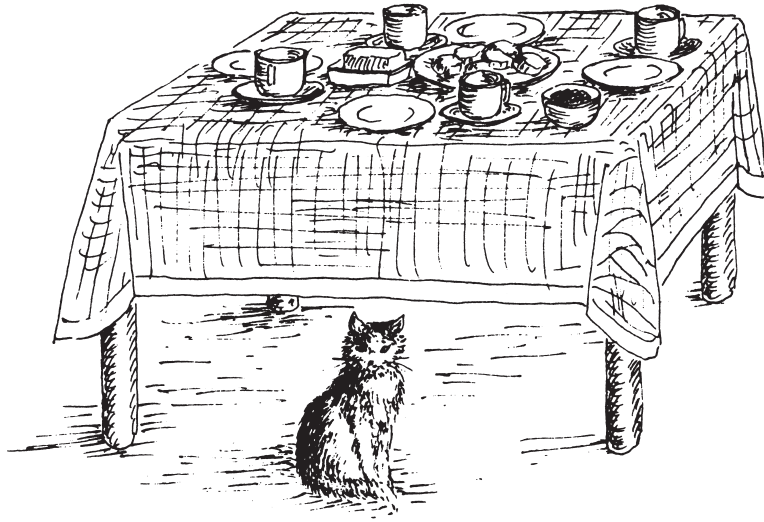
Collect a mass of small items before the party, for example, paperclips, nuts, macaroni, dried peas, nails, beads, cocktail sticks, rubber bands, conkers, leaves, etc.

Give each child a small bag containing, say, six different items.

Send them off on a hunt to find the right pairs which you have previously hidden around the house or garden.

The winner is the first to arrive back with all the pairs matched.

## VIII. Hungry Teatimes



You are going out to tea today,  
So mind how you behave;  
Let all accounts I have of you  
Be pleasant ones, I crave.

Don't spill your tea, or gnaw your bread,  
And don't tease one another;  
And Tommy mustn't talk too much,  
Or quarrel with his brother.

Say "If you please," and "Thank you, Nurse;"  
Come home at eight o'clock;  
And, Fanny, pray be careful that  
You do not tear your frock.

Now, mind your manners, children five,  
Attend to what I say;  
And then, perhaps, I'll let you go  
Again another day.

From Kate Greenaway's 'Under the Window'

### Wholewheat Drop Scones

8 oz flour  
¼ teaspoon salt  
1 egg  
1 oz sugar  
½ pint milk  
1 teaspoon cream of tartar  
½ teaspoon bicarbonate of soda

Put the flour, salt, cream of tartar and bicarb. of soda into a bowl with the sugar. Mix thoroughly.

Make a well in the centre, beat the egg and stir into the flour, adding the milk gradually to make a smooth, thick batter, beat well.

Grease a griddle or frying-pan. When hot, drop tablespoons of the mixture on the griddle; cook until golden brown on one side, then turn and cook on the other side – serve immediately with butter.

### Welsh Cakes

8 oz plain flour  
pinch of bicarb. of soda  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
4 oz margarine or butter  
3 oz mixed fruit or sultanas  
3 oz caster sugar  
1 egg  
1 teaspoon mixed spice

Rub the margarine or butter with the dry ingredients as if you were making pastry. Then mix in the fruit and add the beaten egg – if the dough seems too dry add a little milk.

Roll out the dough onto a floured surface to about ¼" thick and use a 2½" cutter. Lightly grease a heavy pan or griddle and put over a medium heat and cook the cakes for about 3 minutes each side – don't let them brown too quickly. Serve warm with butter and jam.

### Scotch Pancakes

2 oz butter  
1 teaspoon golden syrup  
5 oz plain flour  
pinch of salt  
1 level teaspoon bicarb. of soda  
1 level teaspoon cream of tartar  
1 teaspoon caster sugar

1 beaten egg  
1 level teaspoon baking powder  
small quantity of milk

Melt the butter and syrup together in a pan. Mix together the flour, salt, bicarb, cream of tartar into a mixing bowl, add the sugar and beat in the egg. Lastly stir in the baking powder and mix well together to form a thick batter, adding extra milk if necessary to give it the consistency of thick cream. Using a tablespoon drop the mixture onto a hot griddle or heavy-based frying pan, greased, and cook for 2-3 minutes, so that bubbles form and burst on the surface. Carefully turn each pancake and cook other side. Cool on a wire rack and serve spread with butter.

### Gypsy Malt Loaf

½ lb plain flour  
pinch of salt  
1 teaspoon bicarb. of soda  
2 oz golden syrup  
1 oz soft brown sugar  
2 tablespoons malt  
2 oz raisins  
2 oz sultanas  
1 oz dates, chopped  
¼ pt milk

Mix flour, salt and bicarb. into a mixing bowl. Gently melt the syrup, sugar and malt in a pan and pour it onto the dry ingredients. Mix well, add the dried fruit and mix to a stiff consistency with the milk.

Turn into a 1 lb prepared loaf tin and bake at 350°F (Reg 3) for 1-1½ hours until the loaf has risen and turned golden brown. Cool on a wire rack and keep in an airtight tin for at least two days before eating, then serve sliced with butter.

### Crumpets

½ oz fresh yeast  
5 teaspoons lukewarm water  
4 oz plain flour  
½ teaspoon sugar  
¼ teaspoon salt  
6 tablespoons milk or a drop more  
1 egg  
2½ oz butter  
Round crumpet rings or 3" metal biscuit cutters

## IX RAINY DAYS AND CONVALESCENCE

*Rain on the green grass  
And rain on the tree  
Rain on the house-top  
But not on me.*

\*\*\*\*\*

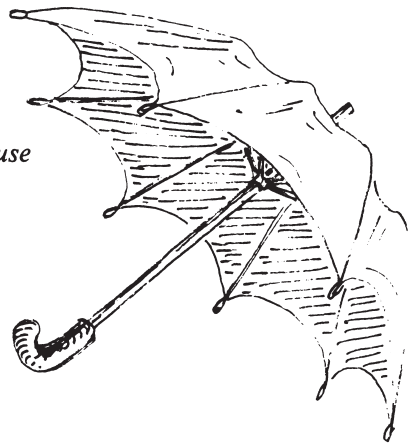
*It's raining, it's pouring,  
The old man's snoring;  
He got into bed  
And bumped his head  
And couldn't get up in the morning.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*Rainy, rainy rattlestones,  
Dinna rain on me,  
Rain on John o' Groat's house  
Far across the sea.*

\*\*\*\*\*

*I hear thunder,  
I hear thunder,  
Hark can you?  
Hark can you?  
Patter patter raindrops,  
I'm wet through,  
So are you.*



### The Elf and the Dormouse

Under a toadstool crept a wee Elf  
Out of the rain to shelter himself.

Under the Toadstool sound asleep,  
Sat a big Dormouse all in a heap.

Trembled the wee Elf, frightened and yet  
Fearing to fly away lest he got wet.

To the next shelter – maybe a mile!  
Suddenly the wee Elf smiled a wee smile.

Tugged 'til the Toadstool toppled in two  
Holding it over him gaily he flew.

Soon he was safe home dry as could be  
Soon woke the Dormouse – good gracious me!

“Where is my toadstool?” loud he lamented  
And that's how umbrellas first were invented.

Oliver Herford

## Picture Game

In **On the Banks of Plum Creek** Laura Ingalls Wilder recorded the following picture game, used for indoor fun during long stormy days a hundred years ago. Laura's mother used a simple slate to tell the story:

Far in the woods there was a pond like this:



The pond was full of fishes like this:



Down below the pond there lived two homesteaders, each in a little tent, because they had not built their houses yet:



They went often to the pond to fish, and they made crooked paths:



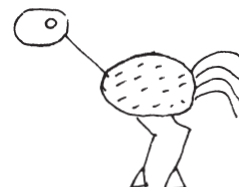
A little way from the pond lived an old man and an old woman in a house with a window:



One day the old woman went out to the pond to get a pail of water:



And she saw the fishes all flying out of the pond, like this:



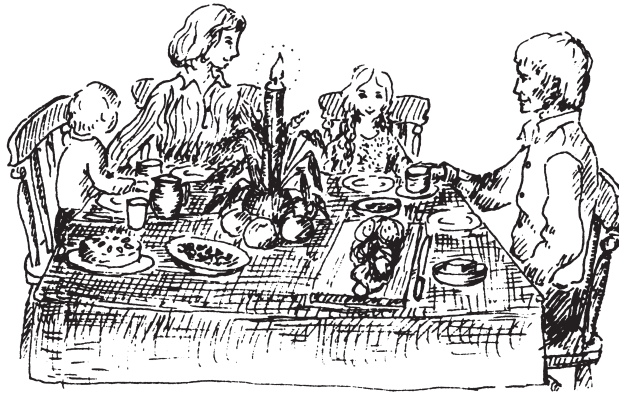
The old woman ran back as fast as she could go, to tell the old man, "All the fishes are flying out of the pond!" The old man stuck his long nose out of the house to have a good look:



And he said, "Pshaw". It's nothing but tadpoles!"



## X EXTRA TOUCHES



Life is often busy, even hectic, in most homes. There may not be enough time to organise a children's party; perhaps members of the household have to work on festival days. Perhaps, then, it is possible to live into the situation as it is, but adding a few 'extra touches' to daily life if wished.

For example, the table we eat at is an important place; sometimes the only place which finds us gathered together to share the day's events. We introduced a simple grace at mealtimes not only because of a religious need but also because it provides a minute's space after the hassle of preparing and serving a meal, making sure everyone has what they need, we sit and hold hands and say:

*A blessing on the meal and peace on the earth.*

What you say can vary but the point is that we are sharing something together, food that has been prepared with thought. Perhaps we owe thanks to the earth, the sun and rain for providing us with good things to eat. Children so often launch into their food without a moment's hesitation and it is good to make them aware of others around them and a moment's pause helps them consider whether everyone has what they need!

If there is space in the middle of the table or a little nook nearby you can use this to bring the treasures of the season or something simple made. For example:

**Spring** a little egg-cup with spring flowers in – primroses, crocus, grape hyacinth, any little ornament with baby animals, little beeswax or plasticine models of nests and suchlike; empty egg shells with cress growing in them.

**Summer** a bowl of summer flowers and perhaps some well-loved shells collected from a holiday.

**Autumn** a little dish of rosehips or berries, things made out of conkers or acorns or a little garden with moss and precious stones – everything is returning to the earth at this time for the winter. Food is being stored by the animals now and we do the same when we use the summer's harvest to bottle, preserve, and pickle. Sometimes we put a miniature pot for each of the children of a favourite jam we have made in the centre of the table and they love to have their very own at teatimes. A decoration of apples and berries can look very beautiful.

**Winter** perhaps a few hyacinths or crocus bulbs in a bowl to remind us of things to come. A few crystals or stones on a bed of moss. At Christmas time a candle arrangement with some yew or evergreen and pine cones will look very effective.

### THE PEACE OF GOD

#### GRACE

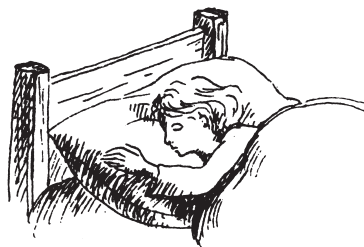
*Earth who gives to us our food  
Sun who makes it ripe and good  
Dearest Earth and Dearest Sun  
Joy and love for all you have done.*

*The Peace of God,  
The Peace of Christ,  
Be upon each thing my eye takes in,  
Upon each thing my mouth takes in,  
Upon my body that is of earth  
And upon my soul that came from on high.*

Celtic Prayer



## Evening Song

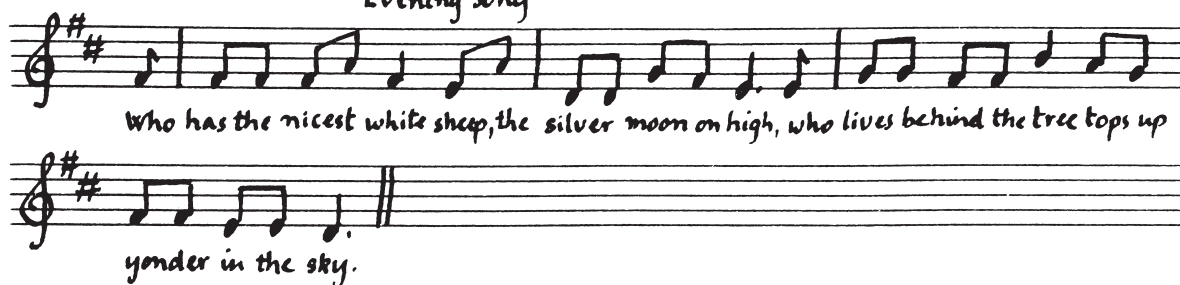


*Who has the nicest white sheep?  
The silver moon on high  
Who lives behind the treetops  
Up yonder in the sky.*

*She comes late in the evening  
When everyone's asleep,  
So slow and calm she wanders  
Across the heavens deep.*

*All night she guards her white flocks  
In meadows blue and deep  
For all the little twinkling stars,  
Are only her white sheep.*

### Evening Song



## Chinese Cradle Song

Dear little baby,  
Don't you cry;  
Your father's bringing water  
From the brook near by.

A red-tasseled hat  
He wears on his head,  
Your mother's in the kitchen  
Baking you some bread.

See, from mother's shoe tips  
Peep three pretty toes!  
Now baby's laughing  
There he goes!

*Willow leaves murmur, hua-la-la.  
Sleep precious baby, close to mama.  
Hua-la-la, baby, smile in your sleep;  
You'll have only sweet dreams  
While my watch I keep.*

## Hindu Cradle Song

From groves of spice,  
O'er fields of rice,  
Athwart the lotus-stream,  
I bring for you,  
Aglint with dew,  
A little lovely dream.

Sweet, shut your eyes,  
The wild fireflies  
Dance through the fairy neem,  
From the poppy bole  
For you I stole  
A little lovely dream.

*Bye, baby bunting,  
Father's gone a-hunting,  
Mother's gone a-milking,  
Sister's gone a-silking,  
Brother's gone to buy a skin  
To wrap the baby bunting in.*