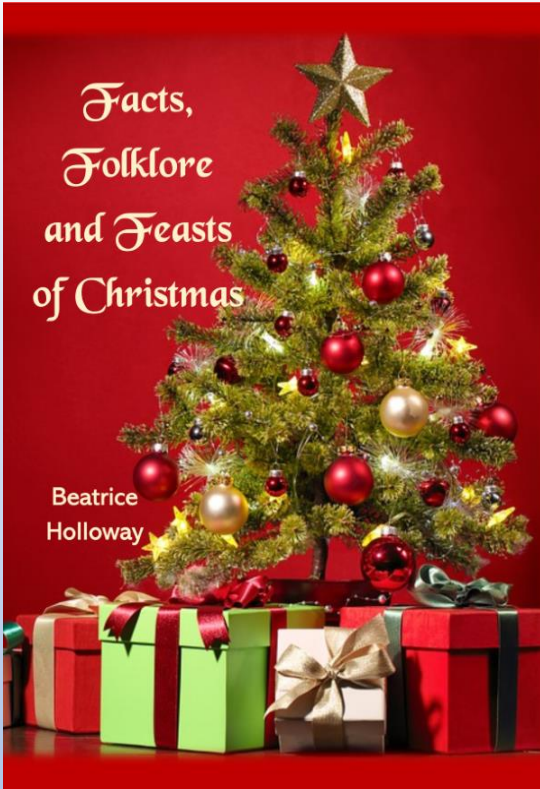


*Facts,
Folklore
and Feasts
of Christmas*

Beatrice
Holloway



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Prologue

There is so much writing and research about Christmas that I hesitated to begin this book. Truth to tell curiosity, in the end, compelled me to begin. What a journey it has proved to be, so much information.

In the Christian world, it is a little disconcerting to learn that the foundations of some of our favourite rituals are based on pagan traditions. Pagan, in this work, embraces all aspects of religion, customs and ceremonies of pagan time, some of which included human sacrifices to their gods. How clever of the early church dignitaries to embrace and soften these long-held pagan rites.

Many questions have been raised about the timing of Christ's birth. The telling of his birth to the trusting, illiterate populace of the past, was magical, a birthday to celebrate.

What, then, is the truth or what is fiction? Much has been left out. To be honest, I have selected information that intrigued me or I just didn't know. The fact remains, that the combination of the celebrations, should it be the winter solstice or the birth of Christ, is a joyful time, a time to give, not only of presents, but a time to give goodwill to our loved ones and strangers.

I have chosen to share with you, some of my interesting discoveries, as well as a few Christmas experiences of my family and friends. I do hope that you enjoy your reading.