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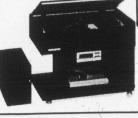
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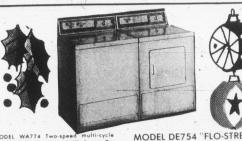






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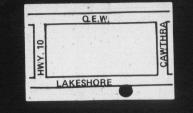
3 side chairs, 1 arm chair, 1 buffet - 50" x with leaf 40 x 62 - 72". 1 buffet - 50" x 16" - 72". With glass shelves & light, Factory List

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By Helen Kaulbach

Open up for

Little Christmas (Jan. 6), homes in most small towns in Newfoundland ring with the singing and dancing of

The mummers come in all ages, sizes, shapes and kinds of outlandish dress. They come bearing accordians, guitars, mouth organs, drums or a child's tin horn; anything to make music or

door and a high, falsetto cry of "Let the mummers in!" or "Any mummers allowed in?" they crowd into the house and the fun begins. According to tradition, they are supposed to entertain their hosts in return for food and drink.

Usually one of the group can play the instrument hs is carrying (an amazing number of Newfoundlanders have a natural gift for music, as shown by their background in the field of music) and soon everyone, mummers and hosts, are singing and doing a lively dance. When the dance comes to

an exhausted end mummers are rewarded with a piece of fruitcake and a glass of syrup or rum, depending on the host's estimation of the mummer's age (not always accurate).

The mummers try their best not to be identified and the variety of clothing shows their efforts. The men tend to dress like women, and vice versa. Favorite costumes are a sheet draped Arabstyle and held with pins; a father's winter overcoat that reaches to mother's ankles: a mother's long flannelette

seveeral sizes too large; or anything that doesn't fit or belongs to the opposite sex. Professionally-made

costumes are out, as are store-bought masks. best mask is a piece of sheer stuff, for instance, curtain material, draped over the head and held in place by a cap. The person wearing it can see through the material, but is unrecognizable underneath.

A thicker mask makes it difficult to breathe while singing and dancing, butmost mummers end the visit by unmasking, so they get a breath of fresh air og casionally Mummering, or mum-

ming, had it's origin in England as early as the 13th century. In those days, groups of people roamed the streets during the winter festival and entertained at the houses to which they were invited. Later, during the 16th and

17th centuries, mummers acted as entertainers in the Manor Houses of the fuedal lords. A Lord of Misrule and a House Jester were appointed to keep the festivities going. These festivities often took the form of masquerading and pan-tomimes presented by the mummers

In later yeas, the mummers were like troubadours, entertaining in return for food. They were finally outlawed by Parliament when the Puritans came to In the latter half of the 18th

century, the mummers returned to the English entertainment world, not as

a pageant usually presented at Christmas.

The plot of the play was usually the same every year, with a fight in which the hero was killed and later revivied. All the performers were male and the characters included a fool and a man in woman's clothes. The performers ended the play by taking up a collection.

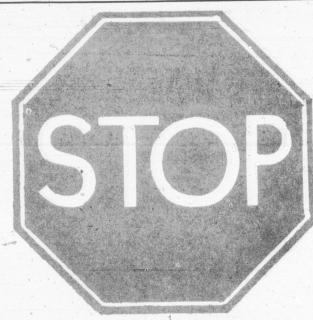
According to Farley Iowat, an adopted Mowat, adopted Newfoundlander who has now flown the nest, mummering originated not in England, but in Rome during the ancient orgies of the Saturnalia The Saturnalia was a orgy

of freedom from law and morality and, according to Mowat, was headed by mummer king known as the Lord of Misrule

He also says that some mummers call themselves Jannies, which is a link with the god Janus, from whom January got its name.

However, I disagree with Farley on this, as I disagree with him on a lot of subjects. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica and Mummering Folklore, mummering originated in England. Most Newfoundlanders also insist that the correct name is "Johnny" the street call to each other, "Hey, Johnny!"

Although mummering, or Johnnying, is no longer practiced in England, it is still known in a couple of Newfoundland, a British Crown Colony until 1949 when it became a province, is probably the only place where it is carried on.



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