

# Christmas Customs of Old Whitby

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## Synopsis

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This booklet covers most of the known Christmas customs at this famous old seaport. It is based on the script of a radio program that I wrote and narrated for BBC Radio Cleveland in 1991 and it was broadcast on Christmas day of that year. Whitby was the port where Captain Cook, the famous Royal Navy explorer and navigator learnt his trade from Quaker shipbuilders and he no doubt experienced, if not participated in this book's customs as a young apprentice seaman.

Whitby was (and probably still is) a town bathed in ancient superstitions, particularly those of the town's sea folk. Small wonder then that it plays such a significant part in Bram Stoker's famous Gothic horror novel *Dracula*.

The stories about these customs were collected by me from the extensive historical records and books of the Whitby Literary and Philosophical Society, which I was a member of, as well as face-to-face discussions I had with some of the townsfolk, in the course of my duties as The Collector of Dues for the Port of Whitby in the 1980s.

## Reader's comments

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