



# How and Then

By Joanne Jensen

It would be impossible for me to write a column for the last week of October without mentioning Halloween for it is my favorite holiday.

The celebration of Halloween came rather late to the New World. The great Irish immigration of the 1840's brought the celebration of Allhallows and All Souls to our shores.

The Irish believed that the "little people" were especially active around Halloween and that any vandalism that occurred at this time could be blamed upon them. These later colonists began the custom of holding gatherings at farmhouses on the night of October 31. Since this was the time that apples and nuts were ripe, these items figured large in the celebration, often called "Snap Apple Night", or "Nutcrack Night" in pioneer days. The merrymakers played the traditional games of bobbing for apples and peeling apples to reveal the initial of a future bridegroom.

They also discovered that the American pumpkin make an excellent jack-o-lantern, and these carved pumpkins became a traditional part of Halloween.

In lusty pioneer communities practical jokes were popular at anytime of year but especially at Halloween. "Honest householders on the morning of Nov. 1 were likely to find their wagon on the barn roof, the front gate hanging in a sycamore tree, and the outhouse lying on its side.

It has been suggested that the prevalence of indoor plumbing has taken a great deal of the "sport" out of Halloween.

If you should open your door Halloween and see a tall trick or teater dressed as the Jolly Green Giant, without a trick or treat bag but with a large glass in hand, don't call the police, it just be some adult who's favorite holiday is Halloween.