

Date of Xmas

1. Early development. Habitual observance of Sun., Good Friday, Easter came first. Then Pentecost and Lent. Xmas not until 4th century as general observance.
2. Work of Hippolytus, 216-224 A.D. Early tradition in church that conception took place on Passover and thus birth in Dec or Jan. By tracing back to the date of Passover Hippolytus late in his life in work on Daniel calculated nativity on 25 Dec. This done about 235 A.D. Earlier had placed in 2 Jan but revised when came to believe X's ~~life~~ public ministry was 3 yrs and not 1 on basis of Jn. Note his conclusions not reached in connection with any heathen festival.
3. Relation to heathen festival. See above. Originally no relation. But in 4th century when Xmas more widely observed and when observed in Rome it fell at about same time as festival of the Sun or Mithras. In 354 2 feasts appear in same calendar.
4. In Eastern church. 6 Jan came to be observed in 300. Can't tell any reason why that date used. Observed in Jerusalem as late as 375 but in Antioch 25 Dec used. In Alexandria 25 Dec not introduced until council of Ephesus 430 A.D.