

SANTA CLAUS IS A REAL AMERICAN!

He is Father Christmas to English; Kriss Kringle to Germans.

By CALEB JOHNSON

All over the world on the 25th of December Christmas of all creeds and sects celebrate the birth of the Messiah with the festival of Christmas—the Mass of Christ. But only in countries whose traditions and culture derive from Teutonic sources do folk celebrate the day by giving presents.

In Italy, France, Spain, the nations of South America and other countries where the Latin culture prevails, Christmas is celebrated as a great church festival but nobody thinks of giving anybody a present at Christmas time. New Year's Day is their great gift time.

In Germany and in all the countries having the Teutonic background, which includes Norway, Sweden and Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, England and the British Dominions and the United States, Christmas has become the great gift-making season of the year, especially the time for giving presents to children.

Santa Claus himself, however, is an American!

The children of England have never heard of Santa Claus, unless they read American stories. The jolly old chap with white whiskers who fills the stockings secretly on Christmas eve is known to the little ones of the British Empire as "Father Christmas."

German children call the stocking-filler "Kriss Kringle," and by that name he is known in some parts of the United States and elsewhere. "Kriss Kringle" is a corruption of the German "ChristKindlein," the Christ Child. The peasant folk of Germany have come to believe that the giving of Christmas presents is symbolic of the bringing of gifts to the manger at Bethlehem by the Wise Men of the East. But that is not the source from which Christmas giving originated.

Secret gifts to children are a tribute to the memory of St. Nicholas, just as the name "Santa Claus" is an Americanization of the Dutch name or that good old father of the church. "San Niklaas" as the early Dutch settlers of New York called the patron saint of the children, scholars, merchants and sailors, sounded like "Santa Claus" to the ears of the English children, who learned of him from their Dutch playmates. And Santa Claus he has been ever since to generations of American children, though up to fifty or sixty years ago it was not considered dignified by the grown-ups to refer to him except by his full name, St. Nicholas.

The figure of St. Nicholas as a little fat man in a fur-trimmed coat, riding in a sleigh drawn by reindeer, and slipping down chimneys with a pack on his back, to fill the stockings which hung from the mantel of the open fireplace, was given its present fixed form by Clement C. Moore, whose poem beginning "Twas the night before Christmas" was written nearly a hundred years ago. Mr. Moore did not call him Santa Claus but entitled his poem, "A Visit from St. Nicholas."

Who was the real Saint Nicholas? Why is he associated with the giving of presents to children? Nobody knows very much about him. Like some of the other leaders of the early Christians, a mass of legend and myth have grown up about his name, but the records are strangely silent.

All that is known definitely is that he was the Bishop of Myra, a town in Asia Minor, about three hundred years after Christ. Nobody knows how the legends about him started, but he was held in such high esteem that within a century or two after his death thousands of churches were named for him. In England alone there were at one time a



"Lucky Strike," the fat black Aberdeen-Angus calf that young Elliott Brown of Rose Hill, Iowa, raised was well named. At the International Livestock Exposition in Chicago he earned \$9,142.50 for the boy. Lucky Strike won the Grand Championship steer award, two \$500 cash prizes, \$375 in other prizes, and was auctioned off for \$7,837.50 to J. C. Penney. Elliott will pay off the mortgage on his father's farm, send himself through Agricultural College and raise more prize cattle.

thousand churches of St. Nicholas, and he was established as the patron saint of all Russia away back in the Middle Ages.

Pictures of St. Nicholas usually show him standing in a tub with three boys. The legend back of this is that he miraculously restored to life three youths who had been killed by an innkeeper and their dismembered bodies packed in a salt-tub. But the story of St. Nicholas which associates his name with secret gifts is that he learned of a poor man with three daughters, who were unable to get husbands because they had no dowries. Their father was planning to kill the daughters and himself when St. Nicholas slipped into their cottage by night and filled the stockings of the daughters with gold!

St. Nicholas Day is December 6th, and for a thousand years the Eve of St. Nicholas, December 5, was the date for filling the stockings. Christmas was not fixed on December 25 until the Christian church was nearly 500 years old. In some parts of the church it was celebrated on January 6th, elsewhere on March 25th. There is, of course, no record of the date of the birth of the Saviour. But the Angles, the ancient German people whose blood and traditions still rule the English-speaking world as well as the German, had a pagan festival on December 25, "Modranecht" or Mother's Night, when their New Year began, and in the course of centuries that festival came to be celebrated as the anniversary of the greatest event in the life of the greatest event in the life of the greatest mother of all time, Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

Christina was still, however, distinctly a religious festival. St. Nicholas Day remained the day when the children had their innings, until the sixteenth century. On St. Nicholas Day it was the custom to elect a Boy Bishop, who appointed other boys to the offices of the church, and the youngsters ruled their towns (since in those days the church dominated everything) until Holy Innocents Day, December 28. In some part of Germany the Boy Bishop ceremony persisted until 1799. But in England Henry VIII abolished it in 1532. Queen Mary restored it in 1552 and Elizabeth abolished it finally a few years later.

The festivities which had been a part of St. Nicholas Day then began to be transferred to Christmas, though there was a time when even Christmas celebrations were forbidden in England. That was in 1644, when Cromwell's Puritan Parliament passed an act forbidding any religious services at Christmas on the ground that it was a heathen festival! This feeling against Christmas persisted among the Puritan settlers of New England down to the nineteenth century.

The exchanging of gifts by grown-ups on Christmas Day is a very modern idea indeed. And children today know where their presents come from: they no longer believe in the good "San Niklaas" who fills their stockings secretly by night. Perhaps the world was happier when Christmas giving was less of an obligation and more of a joy and the little ones still believed in fairies and Santa Claus.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Becket were in town from Eight Mile Tuesday to do some shopping.

BRESLINS BUY HOME.
Mrs. Josephine Johnson sold her residence and real property, on which it is located, just north of the Case apartments on Main street, to Mr. and Mrs. Ed Breslin on Saturday. The Breslins will make their home there.

Mrs. Ed Engelman of Ione is confined to the Heppner hospital because of illness.

Mrs. Rebecca Baldwin has been confined to her bed for several days with an attack of influenza.

M. H. Kopple, who has been in business in Heppner for the past several years, left the city on the Tuesday evening train.

NOTICE OF STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING.
Notice is hereby given that there will be a meeting of the stockholders of the Farmers & Stockgrowers National Bank of Heppner, Oregon, on the second Tuesday in January, 1930 (January 14, 1930), between the hours of 9:00 o'clock a. m. and 4:00 o'clock p. m. of said day, for the purpose of electing directors, and for the transaction of such other business as may legally come before the meeting.
E. D. HALLOCK, Cashier.
Dated this 17th day of December, 1929.

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SATURDAY AND MONDAY
December 21 and 23

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Broken Mixed, 18c
2 lbs. 35c
Plain Mixed, 14c
2 lbs. 27c
French Mixed, 29c
2 lbs. 55c
Chocolates, 20c
2 lbs. 38c
- Oh Boy! Oh Boy!**
Loads of Fun with this AFFILIATED BUYERS' SPECIAL
Coaster Wagon
Regular Value \$6.50
On Special \$3.98
- Candied Fruits**
Fancy Glace CHERRIES
3 1/2 oz. Gl. ... 20c
CHERRIES
1/2-lb. Box ... 39c
PINEAPPLE
1/2-lb. Box ... 39c
- Gold Bar Raisins**
Fancy Seedless
15 oz. Pkg. ... 10c
- Del Maiz Corn**
Taste its delicious sweetness! A new brand of Corn... Not just another brand
Can ... 18c
2 for 35c
- Marshmallows**
CAMPFIRE
In Sanitary Package
Pkg. ... 27c
- Peaches**
Fancy Banquet
6 to 8 halves to can, 2 1/2's
Can ... 29c
- Free Free**
A Big STICK of CANDY With 1-lb. Pkg. Affiliated Buyers' Best Highest Quality Coffee
Special ... 40c
- Xmas Suggestion**
Green Enameled Rubber Step Folding Step Ladder
Regular Value \$3.00
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- Walnuts**
California No. 1
lb. ... 25c
2 lbs. for 40c
- Brazils**
Nigger Toes
lb. ... 18c
2 lbs. for 34c
- Currants**
OTTER BRAND FANCY
11 oz. Pkg. ... 19c
- Candied Peel**
Citron, 1/2 lb. ... **24c**
Lemon, 1/2 lb., **17c**
Orange, 1/2 lb., **17c**
- Rodman Peas**
Fancy Petit Pois
Very Fancy Small, Tender and Sweet, 2's
Can 2's ... 25c
- Oysters**
One's
Can ... 18c
- Shrimp**
One's
Can ... 18c
2 for 35c
- Cookies**
Fancy BUTTER MACAROONS
10 oz. Pkg.
From the Recipe of the Royal Kitchens of Denmark
Special Pkg. ... 20c

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