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 Christ-mas—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 na-tions of South America and other countries where the Latin culture prevails, Christmas is celebrated as 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 counthies having the Teutonic background, which includes Norway, Sweden and Denmark, Austria, Switzerland, Holland, Belgium, Eng. land 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.

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

Santa Claus himself, however, is

an American!

"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 cor-ruption of the German "ChristKind-lein," the Christ Child. The peasant folk of Germany have come to be-lieve that the giving of Christmas presents is symbolic of the bringing of gifts to the manger at Bethlehem the Wise Men of the East. But that is not the source from which Chrsitmas giving originated.

Secret gifts to children are a tribute to the memory of St. Nicholas, fust 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 fo 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. 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

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"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.

and he was established as the pa-tron saint of all Russia away back the children had their innings, until in the Middle Ages.

Pictures of St. Nicholas usually show him standing in a tub with three boys. The legend back of this boys to the offices of the church, and is that he miraculously restored to life three youths who had been killed by an innkeeper and their dismembered bodies packed in a salt-nub. Part the stern of all Mark. 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 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.

The festivities which had been a part of St. Nicholas Day then began to be transferred to the standard of th Nicholas slipped into their cottage by night and filled the stockings of

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 until 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 Sav-German people whose blood and tra-ditions 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.

thousand churches of St. Nicholas, tinctly a religious festival. St. Nichthe sixteenth century. On St. Nichclas Day it was the custom to elect

Innocents Day, December 28, In some part of Germany the Boy Bishop ceremony persisted until 1799. But in England Henry VIII

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 grownups on Christmas Day is a very modern idea indeed. And children today know where their presents come from: they no longer believe the good "San Niklass" who fills their stockings secretly by night. Perhaps the world was happier when Chrsitmas 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 Christmsa was still, however, dis- do some shopping.

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\$15 ing and a particular in the second se



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Mr. and Mrs. Ed Breslin on Saturday. The Breslins will make their Mrs. Ed Engelman of Ione is con-

ned to the Heppner hospital beause of illness Mrs. Rebecca Baldwin has been onlined to her bed for several days

ofth an ottack of influenza

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

Notice is hereby given that there will be a meeting of the stockholders of the Farmers & Stockgrowers National Bank of Hepping, Oregon, on the second Tuesday in January, 1930 (January 14, 1930), between the hours of 5:00 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.

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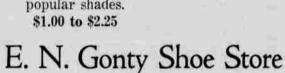
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