

Lean Old Saint May be Laughing Today One-Time Bishop Has Fabulous History

Somewhere in the next world a tall, lean, saintly old man is probably sitting and chuckling gently at his legend.

Between listening to the prayers of pawn brokers, Russians, sailors, merchants and thieves, Nicholas one-time bishop of Myra, may well take time out now and then to enjoy his reputation as Santa Claus.

What he thinks of a certain Dr. Clement Clarke Moore, the Columbia University professor who set him up as a portly old gent with a white beard and an over-large stomach, is sleight and a team of reindeer is another matter.

But Nicholas probably does not see the rest of the legend.

Few Facts Narrative

Not many facts have survived the destructive ravages of time since the third century A.D. but the few there are are not many.

Once an impoverished gentleman of Myra, at his wife's and because he had three daughters and no dowries with which to encourage young men for them determined to sell them into what the official record calls a "life of shame."

Nicholas, bishop of Myra slipped by and so the story goes, left them three golden balls in secret. In any case, he left enough cash to find husbands for all of them.

The staying children of Myra too, had reason to remember the bishop. Mysterious packets of food regularly appeared on their dinner steps—and there were always sweets among them.

"A Most Pious Man"

Home's Yearbook for 1926 records with a straight face that Nicholas was a most pious man indeed. "When he was an infant at breast he fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays and sucked but once on each of those, and that towards evening."

Nicholas, buried himself elsewhere, too.

Once, when he was sailing on the Mediterranean, his ship was menaced by a storm which promised certain destruction. The bishop took the wheel himself and steered her to safety.

Hence his popularity as a patron saint.

Pawnbroker's Sign

The three balls which are the sign of pawnbrokers, the world over, are representative of the three balls which he gave to the girls of Myra, though in some quarters his private doubts as to their appropriateness.

His ship-steering exploit made him the patron saint of the Russians. His reputation for requests made him, the patron saint of merchants and, for other reasons, thieves adopted him as their patron.

It happens, however, that his birthday was December 5, not enough to Christmas, or five days before the fifth century, when there was no official date for Christmas and near enough afterwards to the old pagan end of the year celebration to make an integral part of festivities.

Sinter Klaus

It was, however, the Dutch who first connected him with Christmas presents and the English Santa Claus is very close to the pronunciation of the Dutch for Saint Nicholas - Sinter Klaus.

The effort, of course, was probably connected with the Christianization of old pagan ceremonies.

The old Norse and Celtic god Odin was the giver of gifts to mankind and has official rites connected with the end of the year ceremonies.

The transition, perhaps, wasn't too hard. For, in some of the old poems, Odin is called Hnikar - a tongue twister whose supposed pronunciation comes close to Santa.

Odin had a long white beard, wore a many-colored cloak and rode through the sky on a giant white horse.

A Host of Elves

With him came a host of elf-like helpers who have become the Christmas elves today - and in some of the Scandinavian countries Odin and his helpers are still a traditional part of Christmas. Odin too, gave the British Christmas its mistletoe, yule-log and its

was said to be all of which were a part of the cult of Yuletide.

Another Celtic name for Odin is another Celtic name for Odin.

Now and then he had an evil companion, Lok, with him but the Dutch cleaned up Lok and made him Black Peter, Santa's evil helper.

Odin, of course, dropped his presents down the chimney. The only feasible thing of yours, taking a white horse through the sky. And in Norway, Christmas presents are thrown in the water around the hearth.

In Holland, too, St. Nicholas used to be a horse.

Pagan Hangover

The Dutch took him to New York with them but the English Puritans put a stop to him as a pagan hangover.

Columbus D. Moore, however, remembered all that.

And one night near Christmas, 1822, when his wife had left him to entertain their nine children he sat down in deep depression to write a poem and drew from a picture.

The poem had to be:

"Twas the night before Christmas, and all through the house, Not a creature was stirring, Not even a mouse.

It became a classic, quoted by accident. Dr. Moore, a modest scholar, never published it and the picture he drew became a classic conception of Santa Claus.

It's idea was simple. He had been out delivering Christmas presents in a sleigh that afternoon. And the portly old gent with the beard looked rather like you guessed it, Dr. Moore.

So Santa came back across the Atlantic. His familiar, of course, weren't over. Instead, they are the white hair.

In 1850, the old and aged, of Spanish Christmas, yards because of a poor campaign against his "deplorable competition with the

House Plants Require Special Winter Care

There is a common error of fact to keep in mind in caring for house plants, says the Dept. of Horticulture, Ontario Agricultural College.

As the days get shorter, it is much more important to move to the best light locations in the house. Most plants have a day temperature of 55 deg. F. and a night temperature of 50 deg. F. to 60 deg. F. Some large temperature variations are best for the plants. The plants should be moved to a window. Drafts should be avoided. Be careful of spots when drawn across the window and prevent the plants from being in a cold draft.

During severe weather it may be wise to place a piece of corrugated cardboard between the plants and the window. Plants may be injured beyond recovery by cold but slightly injured plants if placed in a cool room and sprinkled with cold water, often be thawed out with little or no damage cut back to a good bud and grow afresh.

ANNUAL
NEW YEAR'S PARTY
Sat., Dec. 27
at
**GEORGETOWN ARENA
ROSE ROOM**
HATS, NOISEMAKERS ETC
THE MODERNAIRES
plus
THE MIDNIGHTERS
Rock and Roll Group

Christmas Gift-Wrapping Skit At Nassagaweya W.I. Meeting

Mrs. M. Malson was hostess for the December meeting of the Nassagaweya Women's Institute with the president, Mrs. Cargill, presiding. The meeting opened with the Star and the Mary Stewart Collier. The program committee took charge with Mrs. K. Griffith leading an attack on Christmas in Our Hearts, stressing that happiness given to others comes back in full measure. A very timely Christmas skit was then presented, featuring a family wrapping up their gifts. Mrs. A. Padbury, Mrs. M. Anderson and Mrs. M. Moffat took the parts of the grandmother, grandchild and grandfather respectively.

Enjoy Recorded Carols

An interlude during the skit, the instrumental group, also presented the lovely Christmas carols O Little Town of Bethlehem, Hark! The Herald Angels Sing, and We Three Kings of Orient Are, on the tape recorder.

Following this part of the program, Mrs. M. Anderson read an article tracing the origin of the Christmas tree custom.

Help in Farm Surveys

The Institutes are being asked to appoint representatives to help in the survey being conducted in February regarding the number and nature of accidents occurring on the farms. Mrs. C. Cargill, Mrs. M. Moffat, Mrs. D. Mullen and Mrs. L. Campbell were chosen for this district.

Following the Queen and Grace, Mrs. L. Anderson and Mrs. Black served a delicious tea. Courtesy of a member was Mrs. A. Frank.

Wellington Residents Eligible for Bounty

Residents of the \$4 bounty in Essex County, Wellington, are eligible for the bounty on the low-paid Saturday work. The bounty is \$2 per day, paid by the Ontario Government and it also represents bounty on the low-paid Saturday work. The bounty is for delivery of food to the townships in which the food has been killed. The bounty will reach \$4.

The township clerk is to report all claims to the county clerk for payment. The bounty goes into effect on January 1.

Only the red boxes are excluded from the bounty payment.

Over the past 12 months, Canadian money supply has been increased by \$1,000,000,000 to more than \$10,000,000,000.



Silent Night



"All is calm, all is bright." So beautifully expressed in the hymns and carols of blessed memory, the Christmas message strikes a responsive chord in every heart today. May you and your family partake in fullest measure of the deep and enduring joy that makes Christmas the happiest time of the year.

SEASON'S GREETINGS
FROM
ACTON-TOWN COUNCIL
WALTER H. COOK, Mayor