

# Santa's beard and suit created by cartoonist

Who gave Santa his red suit, broad girth, white beard, ruddy cheeks and nose, fur-trimmed hat and coat?

Surprisingly enough, the donor was a political cartoonist.

The artist's name was Thomas Nast, cartoonist for Harper's Illustrated Weekly, who also created the now-famous symbols of the Republican elephant and the Democratic donkey.

The figure of Santa that Nast drew in 1863, and perhaps earlier, has proved to be the definitive one, and even

today the figure as drawn by Nast appears occasionally on Christmas greetings.

Won't tamper "Nast's image of Santa was extraordinary," says Mrs. Jeannette Lee, director of design at Hallmark.

"He gave Santa many of the qualities that have endeared him to children ever since, and we wouldn't dream of tampering very much with them today."

Nast first credited Santa with keeping books on good and bad children, having a Christmas toy workshop and

reading letters sent to him by children.

Perhaps it was the now-famous poem, "A Visit from St. Nicholas," by Dr. Clement Clarke Moore, that inspired Nast's illustration of Santa. In this children's classic of 1823, the right jolly old elf, who looked like a peddler with a pack on his back, was first described in print.

Originals Nast followed Dr. Moore's description of Santa in several particulars, but many of his concepts were original.

At the time of Nast's Santa Claus drawings the nation

was at Civil War, and families were separated. In a note to cheer both soldiers and their waiting families Nast drew "Santa Claus in Camp," for Harper's Weekly.

This earliest Santa was different from any artist's creations up till then. He was shown wearing stars and stripes of the Union and distributing gifts to soldiers. Actually, this Santa might have been meant as a representation of Uncle Sam also.

A later, equally moving Nast illustration featured a soldier's Christmas home-

coming. Childhood saint

Born in 1840 in the tiny hamlet of Landau, Bavaria, Nast probably pictured Santa as the long-imagined Saint Nicholas of his childhood.

Albert Bigelow Paine, a friend and admirer of Nast, said the artist often revealed to him his love of the Santa illustrations. He later wrote in his biography of the cartoonist:

"His own childhood in far-off Bavaria has been measured by the yearly visits of . . . St. Nicholas . . . and the girlhood of the woman who was to become his wife (Sarah Edwards of New York) was intimately associated with brilliant and joyous celebrations. "Nast's children later recalled there was always a multitude of paper dolls—marvelously big and elaborate, a race long since become extinct.

Time of splendor "And these the artistic father—more than half a child himself at the Christmas season—arranged in processions and cavalcades, gay pageants that marched in and about those larger presents that could not be crowded into the row of stockings that hung by the family fireplace.

"It was a time of splendor and rejoicing—the festive blossoming of the winter season—and it was a beautiful and sturdy family that made Merry Christmas riot in the

spacious New York home."

In Nast's day, the idea of some sort of Santa was not new to this country. He was introduced to North America by the early Dutch settlers and his name was St. Nicholas. The annual visit of this kind man, who was thought to have been a fourth-century bishop, was his feast day, December 6th.

By 1809, Washington Irving was describing Santa as a small Dutch citizen who looked much like Father Knickerbocker. Irving wondered how the poor old man could get to all the homes in a growing America on his horse, so he invented the famous reindeer-drawn sleigh

## Highest producer

Sandy Buchanan, R.R. 1 Moffat, recently had a high producing three-year-old on record of performance. Analea Dividend Lottie, a homebred Holstein cow, produced 29,907 lbs. of milk, 692 of fat, 3.3 test for a breed class average of 201 for milk and 182 butterfat.

Lottie went on to complete the three-year-old record in 349 days, producing 22,103 of milk, 735 of fat. She is sired by Dividend Clipper and out of Amoslea Linda Pabst Mercedes.



May all the peace, happiness and blessings of this holy season be bestowed upon you and yours. A very Merry Christmas to one and all.

Jessie & Staff

Simpsons - Sears Agency



"HELLO, LITTLE ONE" was title for this famed drawing of Santa, by Thomas Nast from Harper's Weekly. Nast, a noted 19th century political cartoonist, was the first to illustrate Santa as a bearded, red-nosed jolly old man whose rotund figure was clothed in a fur-trimmed red suit.

## Gold, Frankincense And Myrrh were the Gifts of the Magi...

"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh." (Matthew 2:11)

Of these three gifts, only gold is still today a familiar and precious commodity. However, in the time of Christ, both frankincense and myrrh were equally valuable and well-known commodities, used in trade between the Middle East and Mediterranean countries.

Gold, because of its rarity and beauty has been the world's most precious metal since its discovery more than 6,000 years ago. Then, as now, it served as a medium of exchange, and was considered a symbol of wealth and power. Because gold is soft and pliable, it was also used for making fine jewelry and artifacts.

Both frankincense and myrrh are gum resins of trees, which grow only near the monsoon regions of Ethiopia, Somaliland and Southern Arabia.

Frankincense, which comes from a tree of the same name belonging to the balsam family, is an aromatic gum resin and was an important ingredient of an incense mixture used in Hebrew religious rituals. It was also used as an air purifier and as a remedy for certain physical ailments.

Myrrh is a fragrant, bitter-tasting gum resin exuded from any of several shrubs, which grow in the same sections as frankincense. It was used mainly as a base for ancient cosmetics and perfumes. It was also used medically as a pain-killer and in mouthwash mixtures. It is used in some mouthwashes today. Myrrh also was used in many religious ceremonies.

Anyone who is curious about these substances may find them at The American Museum of Natural History in New York City. The Museum usually features all three treasures as part of its December special exhibit.



CENSER, gaily decorated, from Kuwait, in use today for burning frankincense.

Photo courtesy The American Museum of Natural History



## Christmas Greetings

On that first Christmas, a special Star shone bright over the Mother and Child. May the Christmas star of peace, joy and happiness shine bright over you and yours for Christmas and all through the year.

EDDIE & LOU

DOMINION HOTEL

*It's Christmastime*  
Let joy enter your hearth and home.  
Thanks for your support.  
DON, ROY, CHARLIE AND VERN  
**LAKEVIEW CENTRE**

*Wishing You Christmas Joy*  
A season of peace and wonder, excitement and joy is Christmas! May this spirit of happiness be with you always.  
Jim & Betty Elliott and Tim McIntyre  
**JIM'S IN-N-OUT VARIETY**  
—CHRISTMAS STORE HOURS—  
Open Christmas Eve 10 a.m. 8:30 p.m.  
Open Christmas Day 12 noon to 3:30 p.m.