

How Santa Claus Became An American Christmas Tradition

The tradition that Santa Claus is the giver of Christmas presents comes to us from a fourth century German legend of St. Nicholas (Santa Claus is a German corruption of the name). When St. Nicholas learned of three young women who were unable to attract suitors because their father was too poor to provide them with a dowry, he filled three bags with gold one night

and threw them into the windows of the rooms of the young women. Soon after, they were all happily married. Unexpected gifts were thereafter attributed to St. Nicholas.

The myth that Santa Claus descends the chimney to fill the stockings comes from the Norsemen. Their legend tells us that at the winter solstice the goddess

Hertha appeared in their fireplaces and brought with her happiness and good fortune.

Dr. Clement Clarke Moore, a professor in the General Theological Seminary in New York, put the myth in the form of a poem, "The Visit of St. Nicholas." He invented the sleigh and the reindeer and his description of St. Nicholas was suggest-

ed by the appearance of a German man-of-all-work in his employ. The sleigh bells were suggested by the bells on the bridle of his own horse. He wrote the poem for his children in 1822 and read it to them on Christmas Eve of that year. This poem has become the foundation of our own rich American tradition about Santa Claus.



THE BEAN KING

In parts of France, Spain, and Mexico they still eat a special 12th Night cake, in which a single bean has been concealed. The finder of the bean is hailed as Bean King — a survival of an ancient pagan custom which chose the King of the Saturnalia by lot in this way.



Good
Wishes
at Christmas

To all the friends we have had the pleasure of serving
— wishes for a warm, old-fashioned, family-filled holiday.

MOORE'S

Terrace Bay

Phone 825-3327

May you enjoy, together
with your loved ones, the
deeply enriching
experience of the spiritual
inspiration of Christmas
and its message
of Peace and Good Will.

Thank You

**Jean Stitt
Schreiber**