

To Six Americans Belong the Credit For Making Santa Claus, the Children's Symbol of Christmas, a Living Reality

By **ELMO SCOTT WATSON**
(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

THE social historians will tell you that the Dutch gave to the world that familiar symbolical Christmas figure, Santa Claus, and that his name is merely a slurring of the Dutch pronunciation of "San Nicholas" or "Sinterklass" which is, of course, "St. Nicholas." They will tell you, too, that Nicholas was an actual person, the bishop of Myra, in Lycia, Asia Minor, in the first part of the fourth century of the Christian era.

In his honor December 6 of each year was set aside as a special feast day. But in the late Middle Ages, when the Catholics and the Protestants both tried to do away with festivities which had grown up around St. Nicholas' day, the children refused to give him up. Gradually the festival in his honor was assimilated into the festivities honoring the Christ Child.

He Comes to America.

When the Dutch settlers came to New Netherlands more than 300 years ago, of course they brought with them their custom of honoring "Sinterklass." In fact, it is said that the ship which carried the first Dutch children to Manhattan island bore a likeness of him as its figurehead. But he wasn't the jolly little fellow that we know. For the Dutch children knew the good Bishop-Saint Nicholas as a solemn, majestic figure in trailing robes, wearing a jeweled miter and gloves and mounted on a fiery white charger.

Even after the British took over the Dutch colony and New Netherlands became New York, the



WASHINGTON IRVING

little Dutch children continued to look for the coming of "Sinterklass" on the eve of December 5 and hang up their stockings. But the English colonists didn't believe in "Sinterklass" and gradually, as the Dutch became assimilated and some of their customs began to change, there came a change in the character and appearance of the good St. Nicholas, too.

A Turning Point.

The American Revolution not only marked a turning point in world history but in the history of St. Nicholas as well. He was no longer the Dutch saint as the Dutch colonists had imagined him. He was a Dutch saint as their English neighbors imagined him and he began taking on Dutch characteristics.

Instead of being a severe, forbidding figure he became a jolly fat little Dutchman. In place of his long robes he began wearing knee breeches and the shoe buckles of Dutch colonial fashion. No longer did he ride the fiery white charger. Now he went about on his errands in a little wagon, drawn by a fat little pony. And, finally—thanks to six Americans—he became the Santa Claus that we know today.

These six Americans were three writers and three artists and all of them contributed their share toward the creation of a Santa Claus so familiar to American children. The first of these six was Washington Irving. Whether Irving simply followed a tradition that was already widely accepted in the state where he was born or actually created a new American Santa Claus is unknown. At any rate, when he published his whimsical "Knickerbocker's History of New York" in 1809 he gave us the first full-length word portrait of Santa Claus, the American.

It is to Irving that we owe our idea of the Dutch colonists as jovial, fat little men, wearing voluminous breeches and smoking long pipes and he made the patron saint of their children the archetype of them all. According to Irving, Saint Nicholas wore a "low, broad-brimmed hat and a



The first known picture of Santa Claus (1839).

huge pair of Flemish trunk hose" and he rode "jollily over the rooftops" in a wagon, dropping splendid presents down the chimneys of the houses where dwelt the children who were his favorites.

It was also Irving who gave him another characteristic which has survived through the years. For, as the Knickerbocker history tells us, "when Saint Nicholas had smoked his pipe, he twisted it in his hat band, and laying his finger beside his nose, gave a very significant look, then mounting his wagon, he returned over the treetops and disappeared."

The next writer to paint a word portrait of Santa Claus was Irving's friend and one-time collaborator, James Kirke Paulding. Paulding, himself of Dutch descent, in his "Book of St. Nicholas," published in 1827, declared that Santa Claus was "as glib as a little Dutchman as ever smoked his way through the world, pipe foremost. . . he is a right fat, roystering little fellow . . . who scorns to follow the pestilent fashions of modern times, but ever appears in the ancient dress of the old patriarchs of Holland."

Moore's Immortal Poem.

It remained, however, for Dr. Clement Clark Moore, in his immortal poem, "A Visit From St. Nicholas," to fix forever in our consciousness the appearance of the children's Christmas saint. Moore was graduated from Columbia university in 1798, and became a professor of Hebrew and Greek in the General Theological seminary in 1821.

He was a prolific writer, one of his literary productions bearing the imposing title of "Observations Upon Certain Passages in Mr. Jefferson's Notes on the State of Virginia Which Appear to Have a Tendency to Subvert Religion and Establish a False Philosophy." However, his most important work, the one at least upon which he believed his fame as a scholar would be secure, was "A Compendius Lexicon of the Hebrew Language." He little



JAMES KIRKE PAULDING

realized that future generations of Americans would remember him better as the author of what he was accustomed to call "a silly poem."

Yet such was the case, for a short time before Christmas in 1822, Dr. Moore wrote for his children a Christmas poem and they were delighted with the rollicking tale. A daughter of Rev. Dr. David Butler, rector of St. Paul's church at Troy, N. Y., who was a niece of Dr. Moore, was a Christmas guest in the Moore home and made a copy of the poem in her album.

The next year she sent a copy of it to the Troy Sentinel and it appeared in that paper, prefaced by a note from the editor saying he did not know who had sent it. By the next year it had appeared in many other newspapers and magazines and within a few years it had found its way into the schoolbooks. By this time inquiries were beginning to be made as to its authorship and eventually Dr. Moore, none too well pleased that his "silly poem"

was so well-known whereas his scholarly "Compendius Lexicon" attracted little attention, admitted its authorship and gave the autographed original manuscript of the poem to the New York Historical society.

How much Moore drew upon Irving and Paulding for his description is not known. But there is a curious parallelism in some of his words and some of theirs, although Moore himself, 40 years later said that "a portly, rubicund Dutchman living in the neighborhood of his father's county seat, Chelsea" near New York city suggested to him the idea of making St. Nicholas the hero of his Christmas piece for his children.

The Reindeer Appear.

It is certain that we are indebted to Moore for making Santa Claus' mode of transportation a sleigh drawn by "eight tiny reindeer." In its original form the poem differs slightly from the present version, particularly in the names of the reindeer. "Viscien" of the original has become "Vixen" and "Donder" has been changed to "Dunder." The title which Dr. Moore gave to his verses was "A Visit From St. Nicholas," but the modern version, taken from the first line, is "The Night Before Christmas."

As for the contributions of the three artists to our image of Santa Claus, the name of the first one—unfortunately for his fame—is unknown. In 1839 a book called "The Poets of America," edited by John Keese, was published. It contained Moore's poem and the illustration for it



DR. CLEMENT CLARK MOORE

was a picture of Santa Claus (reproduced above). Who the painter or engraver was has never been determined but it is believed that this was the first time that a picture of Santa Claus was ever printed.

The world had to wait another 20 years, however, for another portrait of Santa Claus. In 1862, an edition of "A Visit From St. Nicholas," illustrated throughout by F. O. C. Darley, was published in New York. Darley gave us several views of the old fellow at work. One in particular was appropriate, for it showed Santa Claus placing his finger slyly to one side of his nose, just as Dr. Moore had described.

Darley probably was the foremost American illustrator at the time; but, after all, his version seemed to fail to satisfy completely, and another year passed before the real Santa Claus climbed into a chimney, just as readers of the ancient classic had pictured him in their minds. Darley had given us the sly twinkle in the eye of the good-natured elf, and he had made the reindeer at least as tiny as the poet had described them, but something was lacking.

In 1863 a volume of favorite poems was published in which Dr. Moore's poem was included. It was illustrated by Thomas Nast, whom the American public remembers chiefly as a cartoonist for Harper's Weekly, the crusader who almost single-handedly smashed the notorious "Tweed Ring" in New York with his vitriolic cartoons and the artist who added to our gallery of familiar symbols the Republican elephant, the Democratic donkey and the Tammany tiger. In this compilation, Nast turned his attention to depicting the features of Santa Claus, and for the first time converted an illusive figure into visual reality. Nast may, therefore, be said to have created a Santa Claus which remains the model for all who succeeded him.

The social historians tell us that the Dutch gave to the world that familiar symbolical figure, Santa Claus, and that is true. But it was the genius of six Americans—Washington Irving, James Kirke Paulding, Dr. Clement Clark Moore, Felix O. C. Darley, Thomas Nast and that unknown artist for John Keese's "Poets of America"—which made him a living reality for all time to come.

Modern Women Are Adopting Home Sewing as Their Hobby

By **CHERIE NICHOLAS**



your figure. Use jewel buttons for the halter neckline for a glittering touch.

The rustling romantic evening gown of moonbeam blue rayon moire centered in the group is a good style for beginners to undertake. Should you possibly encounter a puzzling move, a few hours spent at the sewing center will clear the way that leads to a professional looking job.

When it comes to a glamour evening dress that's easy to sew, the model of printed crepe to the right is just that. The hood adds an air of mystery. When you don't want it to shelter your curls you will find the 'it' folds into a lovely soft collar. It is one of the noted cover-up dinner frock types that are definitely high style this winter. Its fashion points are legion. The long bishop sleeves and the cummerbund that hugs your waistline all bespeak outstanding style details. The waist and skirt are separate, so repeat your costume in various combinations, and change about.

Perhaps the most fun and satisfaction of all lies in making up a wardrobe of pretty house frocks of lovely wash materials. You will find the day-long dress in the inset gives you a grand start in sewing. Fitted and flared with touches of white lace ruffles at neckline and sleeves, this type frock is ever so flattering. Use the ruffler attachment to your machine for the beruffled neckline. The little hemstitcher gadget will achieve picotéd slits for the ribbon-run beading at the neckline.

Pastel plaids and vividly striped taffetas are ideal materials for evening wear. For daytime wear there are exciting new clean plaids, gay corduroys, jersey of sleek rayon weave or warm "comfy" wool type. A fashion "must" is the dress of spun rayon or sheer wool in pastel shade made classically simple, depending on effective jewelry and colorful accessories for "last word" chic.

(Released by Western Newspaper Union.)

ARE you among the thousands of enthusiastic women who have taken up home sewing as a hobby? Not only is this a fascinating pastime but it has been proven that the "make your own" venture is a profitable and gratifying one. It yields big dividends in style, quality, and money saving, and gives a feeling of general satisfaction in the matter of self expression and accomplishment.

One of the chief rewards home-sewing offers is that the money saved "in the making" enables one to buy the best in materials. Women who make their own pretty frocks and blouses rejoice because they can afford to be "choosy" about the materials they use. Perhaps no other argument is so frequently stressed as this: "Making my own clothes, I can afford the best of materials."

Even if you are a beginner, you'll find it easy to reproduce smart couturier touches in your wardrobe with the aid of modern equipment. The tucks, gatherings, and darts that distinguish current fashions are within easy reach of amateur sewers. Modern sewing machine attachments have put all these dressmaker details at command of the most untutored novice. Even if you have never sewn a stitch you can learn to do a professional job by spending a few afternoons in the sewing center in your community.

The illustration presents several easy-to-make models. The daring charm of the gown shown to the left belies the simplicity with which it is made. The pattern is delightfully free from complications and your sewing machine will whisk up the seams in the gored skirt in a jiffy. It's no trick at all to make the sectional joinings of the midriff and bodice with flat seams that flatter

Penwiper Felts



The new penwiper felt hats are especially designed for young girls. They are offered in all bright colors from which can be chosen the correct personalized color according to the birth date of the wearer. The jaunty quill is in reality a quill pen and cleverly concealed in the perky bows at the back is a pencil. With one of these hats on your head it's easy to get autographs at unexpected moments. The teen-age adore these novel hats.

Lace Yokes

Nowadays the big idea is the simple frock that takes on glamorous accessories. A striking reaction to this trend is found in separate yokes, bibs and revers that sparkle with glittering beadwork.

Winter Housecoat Gains in Elegance

New fashions for leisure hours are, many of them, as elaborate as your favorite evening dress. They are designed with sweeping skirts, slim waists and gleaming metal embroidery. Even when your budget is limited, it is possible to choose a housecoat or lounging robe that has fashion significance.

The trend toward slim skirts has had small influence in this group and skirts are as wide as they have ever been. Newness is seen in the colors, the fabrics and the trimming details.

The vogue for spotted furs has brought lounging robes with spotted trimming. The covered-up look inspires long, full sleeves and high necks, as well as skirts snugly fastened with slide fasteners from neck to knee.

Fabrics run the gamut from printed cottons to deep-pile velvets and soft wools. Printed satins and printed wool jerseys are some of the newest.

Single Piece of Jewelry Gains New Importance

Each season there are certain outstanding fashion gestures that become increasingly and conspicuously important as the season advances. One such is the matter of wearing a single gorgeous glittering clip or brooch pinned to the bodice of your classic simple daytime frock. Flower sprays and exotic birds are favored motifs. These are done in colorful glittering stones or sparkling rhinestones and to say they are dazzling mildly expresses it.

Patterns SEWING CIRCLE



portant fashion point, but also very becoming to slim figures, because it tends to round out the bosom. Make it of lace, or contrast or, as shown in the small sketch, of the frock fabric.

Pattern No. 8826 is designed for sizes 12, 14, 16, 18 and 20. Size 14 requires, with short sleeves, 4 3/4 yards of 39-inch material without nap; long sleeves, 4 1/2 yards, 1/2 yard lace. Step-by-step sew chart comes with your pattern. Send order to:

SEWING CIRCLE PATTERN DEPT.
Room 1324
211 W. Wacker Dr. Chicago
Enclose 15 cents in coins for
Pattern No. Size.
Name
Address

HOUSEHOLD QUESTIONS



Use needles to pin down the pleats when pressing a pleated skirt. The needles will leave no marks when you remove them.

Pumpkin pies will have that rich brown tint if a tablespoon of molasses is added to the filling.

Potatoes to be baked in the skins will cook quicker if they are dried before being placed in the oven.

Don't let any cabbage stumps remain over winter. They harbor pests.

Ammonia and water will remove red ink stains from white cloth.

Airtight boxes or jars make handy containers for keeping cookies fresh. And waxed paper between the layers of cookies keeps them from sticking together.

For Busy Shoppers

Winning popular approval with busy Christmas shoppers are the two handsome gift packages of Camel cigarettes featured by local dealers. The regular Camel carton—10 packs of "20's"—comes in a colorful, holiday dress. Equally striking is the gay Camel package of 4 "flat fifties."

Both packages contain 200 cigarettes—are easy gifts to get, perfect to receive.—Adv.

the Sun... the Soil... and Science...



PUT THE "EXTRAS" IN CALIFORNIA ORANGE JUICE



Best for Juice — and Every use!

You see a deeper color—taste a richer flavor—enjoy more vitamins and minerals in California Orange juice.

For California Oranges ripen in all-year sunshine. They draw on fertile soils fed and watered with scientific care.

They are grand "eating" too—these seedless Navels. Easy to peel, slice and section for recipes.

Those stamped "Sunkist" on the skin are the finest from over 14,000 cooperating growers. Buy several dozen for economy. Copr. 1940, California Fruit Growers Exchange

SEEDLESS

Sunkist CALIFORNIA NAVEL ORANGES