Winter Holiday in many cultures

Norse in Scandinavia celebrated Yule from December 21 (Winter solstice). Burn large logs and feast until they burned out (up to 12 days). Each spark was a new pig or calf to be born

Cows slaughtered so they wouldn’t have to be fed – only time of available fresh meat. Wine and bear done fermenting

Saturnalia – honoring Saturn god of agriculture - hedonistic time,

Feast of the Nativity – birth of Jesus, chose the 25 to absorb traditions of pagan Saturnalia

Throughout the middle ages Christmas was a time for mischief, poor demanded food/wine from rich under pain of mischief. “Lord of misrule: was crowned (student or beggar)

Oliver Cromwell and puritans outlawed Christmas in 1645

Christmas illegal in Boston from 1659 to 1681

Wasn’t a federal holiday until 1870

Upper class didn’t want the class-switching mischief

Washington Irving wrote *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey* which told of peaceful and warm-hearted “traditions” of Christmas.

*A Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens promoted charity and good will

Santa clause came from Dutch saint famous for giving gifts, red and white from coke commercial