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 became this long haired old codger on the sled.

We do have bits and pieces of the legend, like the familiar white bearded old man with lots of gifts of fruit and dainties, dating back to Pirapus of Virgil and Petronius. And the early Christians who exchanged gifts on new year's day would tell their little ones that the Christ child had left the presents the eve before (the German Kris Kringle is derived from Krist Krindli which means Christ child). And in many nations children still await for their trinkets on new year's eve.

But as far as St. Nicholas and Christmas, well, children would leave

out their shoes (later to be replaced by stockings which could hold more loot) on the eve of December sixth in hopes that the patron saint of children would leave them some treats. Some cheap parent in an attempt to cut down on handouts probably amalgamated the two gift giving occasions into one, and old Saint Nick made his rounds 19 days later.

The modern Santa Claus came to America via the Dutch immigrants, who left traces of the god Wodden (god of harvest and elements) on the mythical Christmas personna. Washington Irving first associated the laughing holiday figure with the Russian patron saint, and in 1822 Santa as we know was born thanks to the poem "A Visit From St. Nicholas"

(Twas the night before Christmas) by Clement Moore. And the fur-trimmed bearded old man was immortalized in a cartoon by Thomas Wast in 1863.

And the story surrounding Santa's crawling down chimneys probably dates back to early Christian days when the people followed the old pagan custom of cleaning the chimney on new year's eve in hope that good luck would descent. And if Santa isn't good luck what is? Well he should be thankful that the custom wasn't to clean out the sewers.

Well no matter where many of these customs originated from it still doesn't alter the fact that Christmas is still the most celebrated and vibrant of all the holidays.

No enlightenment for the blind Darkness never relieved

PETERBOROUGH (CUP)—Imagine darkness. Imagine not reading but listening to this article on a tape recorder as one story among others in an essentially auditory universe.

Now imagine being told that this essential channel to the outside world will be silenced by the academic year's end.

For the 120 blind and print-handicapped students across Ontario who use the Audio Library facilities based at Peterborough's Trent Un-

iversity, this scenario is not merely a dark exercise of the imagination but an encroaching reality—the result of the Ontario government's decision to withdraw much of the program's funding by May.

The program, begun in 1973, relies on Trent student volunteers to read books into tapes and mail the cassettes out on request.

Audio Library users learned last spring that the Ontario Ministry of Colleges and Universities will withdraw \$33,000 of the library's \$133,000 budget in May 1983. They were reluctant to turn the decision into a public issue, hoping that quiet lobbying of the government would work.

It didn't. So now they are taking their case to the media, hoping to pressure the government to change its decision. CBC radio and the Toronto Sun have already picked up on the story.

And a print-disabled University of Toronto professor is launching an action with the Ontario Human Rights Commission, alleging that cutting or closing the service will effectively eliminate disabled students' rights to a post-secondary education.

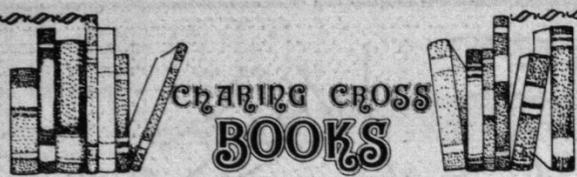
Most of the current budget comes from the Vocational Rehabilitation Service (VRS) of the Ministry of Corrections and Social Services.

Audio Library staff have long chafed under VRS regulations. Each student who wishes to use the service is required to demonstrate financial need, to prove they are legally blind and to demonstrate they have a clear occupational goal.

These rules exclude the print-disabled, such as those who can see but are physically unable to turn the pages of a book.

The library refused to restrict tape-borrowing to those who meet VRS criteria, which left it with a financial deficit. The MCU came under media pressure to bail them out during the 1981 election—also the Year of the Disabled—and decided to extend temporary funding to keep the library running until a decision on permanent funding could be made.

The government has suggested that Ontario universities fund the program cooperatively, but they are already severely squeezed.



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 too much to spend for something
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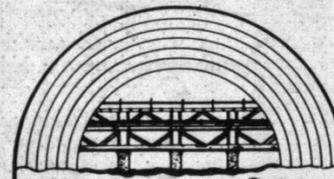


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