

James Bernard Jones  
Malad, Idaho  
April 19, 2007

**Mother Goose  
Holiday Custom**

**Informant:** James Bernard Jones is my father. He was born in 1949 and raised in Malad, Idaho, the son of Nada Waylett Jones Jones and Roland Bernard Jones. His ancestors were among the first Welsh immigrants to settle the Malad Valley. He currently resides in Malad with his wife, Judith.

**Context:** Malad was founded in 1865 by Welsh immigrants and currently has the largest per capita concentration of people of Welsh ancestry outside Wales itself. This interaction was a phone conversation I talked to my dad one evening about some of the memories he has of his relatives and their culture. No one is sure about where this tradition came from, other than it has been passed down in our family for several generations. This leads us to believe that it is a Welsh tradition, but no one has ever been able to verify that.

**Text:** We have always had the tradition that Mother Goose comes to visit on New Year's Eve night and a small gift is left on the hearth of the fireplace underneath each of our stockings. I'm pretty sure that they were wrapped as well. As a kid we always believed that Santa had too many gifts for Christmas and these were just leftover ones that Mother Goose brought around to everyone on New Year's Eve.

**Texture:** My dad told me about this but it was in a way that kind of meant "Well, you already know this, but this is what we did when I was a little." He said it was something that *always* happened every New Year's. When I was little, however, the tradition changed a little. In our family Mother Goose always hid the present she left somewhere in the house. We aren't really sure how it got changed, but my dad thinks that he may have, when originally telling the tradition to my mom, mixed up the Easter bunny (who hides the Easter baskets around the house) and Mother Goose and told her that the gifts were hidden around the house. So it has always been the tradition in my home that Mother Goose hides the gifts she brings.

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Spring 2007