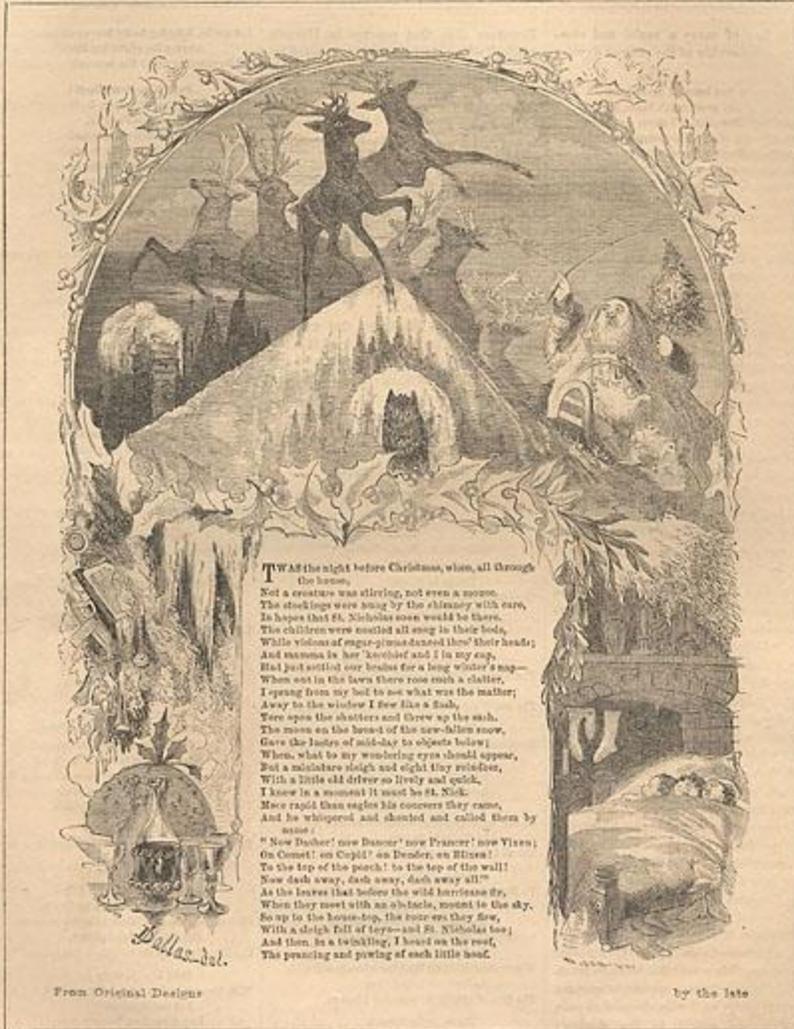
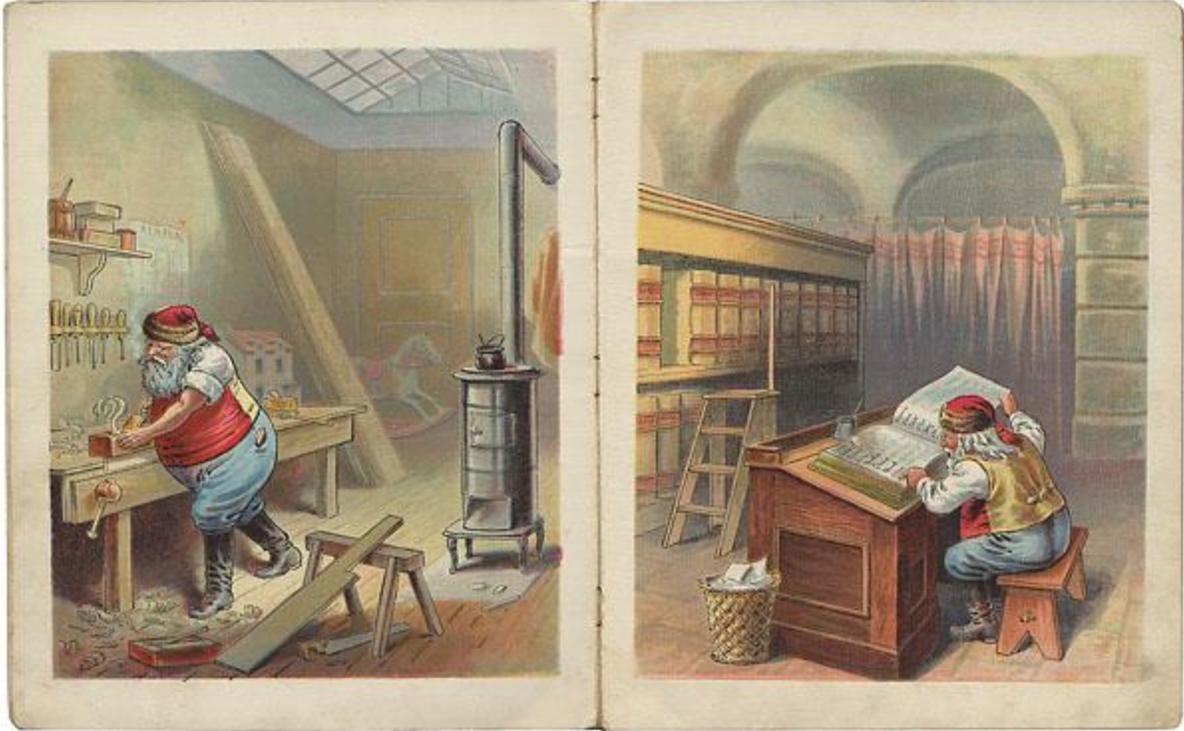


'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house  
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;  
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,  
In hopes that St. Nicholas soon would be there;  
The children were nestled all snug in their beds;  
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads;  
And mamma in her 'kerchief, and I in my cap,  
Had just settled our brains for a long winter's nap,  
When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.  
The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow,  
Gave a lustre of midday to objects below,  
When what to my wondering eyes did appear,  
But a miniature sleigh and eight tiny rein-deer,  
With a little old driver so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment he must be St. Nick.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,  
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:  
"Now, *Dasher!* now, *Dancer!* now *Prancer* and *Vixen!*  
*On, Comet!* on, *Cupid!* on, *Dunder* and *Blixem!*  
To the top of the porch! to the top of the wall!  
Now dash away! dash away! dash away all!"  
As leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;  
So up to the housetop the coursers they flew  
With the sleigh full of toys, and St. Nicholas too —  
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and pawing of each little hoof.  
As I drew in my head, and was turning around,  
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

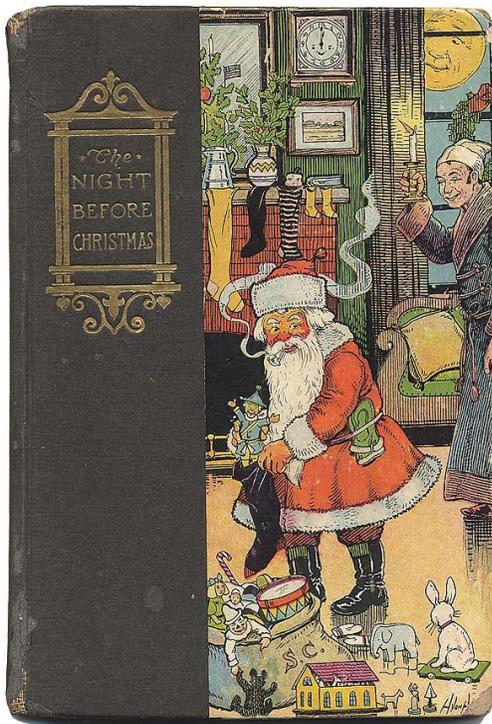
He was dressed all in fur, from his head to his foot,  
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot;  
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back,  
And he looked like a pedler just opening his pack.  
His eyes – how they twinkled! his dimples, how merry!  
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!  
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow,  
And the beard on his chin was as white as the snow;  
The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,  
And the smoke, it encircled his head like a wreath;  
He had a broad face and a little round belly  
That shook when he laughed, like a bowl full of jelly.  
He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,  
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself;  
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head  
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread;  
He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,  
And filled all the stockings; then turned with a jerk,  
And laying his finger aside of his nose,  
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose;  
He sprang to his sleigh, to his team gave a whistle,  
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.  
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight –  
*“Happy Christmas to all, and to all a good night!”*

- Composed by Clement Clarke Moore (July 15, 1779 – July 10, 1863). First published anonymously in the Troy (NY) Sentinel on December 23, 1823.





Illustrations from 1896



Cover from 1907



Famous rendering of St. Nicholas by Thomas Nast (1883)



## James Edgar

Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 1843. In 1878 he arrived in Brockton, and he eventually set up a dry goods store on Main Street. In 1890, he got the idea to dress up as Santa Claus. Within days, children from as far as Boston and Providence came by train to see Edgar. He initially hung around his department store, but over the years, he was known to walk around the streets of Brockton. In addition to dressing up as Santa, he also dressed up as a variety of other figures including, George Washington, a sportsman in a cricket uniform, a sea captain, a clown, and as an Indian "Big Chief". He was also known in town for his progressive ideas. He also instituted the Edgar Layaway Plan. In 1906, he built the James Edgar Building.

## JAMES EDGAR

### DEPARTMENT STORE SANTA TRADITION BEGAN IN BROCKTON

James Edgar, an immigrant from Edinburgh, Scotland, opened Edgar's Department Store on Main Street in Brockton on property owned by the Howard family. He had previously dressed as a sea captain, clown and George Washington to entertain the children of shoppers. In December 1890, he dressed up as Santa Claus based on a popular illustration of a jolly Santa drawn in 1863 by the famous cartoonist Thomas Nast. Edgar did not intend for this to be a commercial attraction. He did it for the enjoyment of the children and to promote Christmas. It began the tradition of the department store Santa Claus. Within days trains from as far away as Boston and Providence brought families and their children to downtown Brockton to see Santa. The idea quickly transferred to department stores around the country and continues to this day. A city park is named for him remembering his generosity to Brockton and its children.

Compliments of Register of Deeds John R. Buckley, Jr. and Brian W. Morse  
From the "Plymouth County Registry of Deeds Notable Land Records Collection"