



## A Beloved Poem



**Mini Fact:**  
Clement C. Moore was an only child.

**T**was 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 sugarplums 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 the 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 the luster of midday to objects  
below.  
When what to my wondering eyes should  
appear,  
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny  
reindeer;  
With a little old driver so lively and quick,  
I knew in a moment it 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, Donder  
and Blitzen!



"To the top of the porch, to the top of the  
wall,  
"Now, dash away, dash away, dash away all!"  
As dry 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 peddler 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!"



Images courtesy The Project Gutenberg

## Moore's accidental fame

Many families have favorite books that they read during the holiday season. One that has been around for a long time is "A Visit From St. Nicholas" by Dr. Clement C. Moore. (You may know it as "The Night Before Christmas.")

Legend tells that Dr. Moore, a scholar who grew up and lived in what is now New York City, wrote the poem for his family on Christmas Eve in 1822.



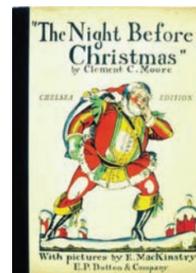
Clement C. Moore

His children told a family friend, Harriet Butler, about the poem, and she sent it to the editor of the Troy Sentinel newspaper in New York.

The paper published it on Dec. 23, 1823, without naming an author. But in 1844, Moore took credit for "A Visit From St. Nicholas" when he included it in a book of his writing.

## A book for everyone

Dr. Moore did not apply for a copyright for his book. A copyright prevents other people from copying something created by an individual or group. For this reason, his poem has been published over and over, but Moore is usually given credit as the author.



Over the years, Moore's poem has been published many times as a book. This version is from 1928.

## Resources



### On the Web:

- [bit.ly/MPMoore](http://bit.ly/MPMoore)
- [youtu.be/cEkZK9NZGFg](http://youtu.be/cEkZK9NZGFg)

### At the library:

- "The Young Oxford Book of Christmas Poems," edited by Michael Harrison and Christopher Stuart-Clark

## Mini Jokes



**Clara:** Who says, "Oh, oh, oh?"

**Clint:** Santa Claus walking backward!

## Eco Note



One of the most powerful Pacific hurricanes on record obliterated a remote Hawaiian island, causing an important turtle nesting site to disappear in early October. Former Category-5 Hurricane Walaka was still packing Category-3 force just before it struck the remote French Frigate Shoals, about 400 miles northwest of the main Hawaiian Island of Kauai. Storm surge wiped out East Island, which is a critical habitat for green sea turtles, monk seals and various types of sea birds.

adapted with permission from Earthweek.com

**Teachers:** For standards-based activities to accompany this feature, visit: [bit.ly/MPstandards](http://bit.ly/MPstandards). And follow The Mini Page on Facebook!



The **Mini Spy Booklets** (Volumes 1, 2 and 3) feature 48 of your favorite puzzles from The Mini Page!

Help Mini Spy and other classic characters from The Mini Page find hidden objects from a list of clues.

Each 8.5x11-inch booklet is just \$4, plus \$1 shipping and handling, for a total of \$5 each.

Visit **MiniPageBooks.com**, or call **800-642-6480** for more information.

Mail payment to: Andrews McMeel Universal, Mini Page Books, 1130 Walnut, Kansas City, MO 64106.



1. Large animal with branching antlers and hoofs (8-letter noun)

2. To make a sound by forcing breath through teeth/lips (7-letter verb)

3. To shine with a sparkling light (7-letter verb)

4. Tall structure in a fireplace where smoke escapes (7-letter noun)

1. Most \_\_\_\_\_ have fur-covered branches on their heads.
2. Carlos will make a high-pitched \_\_\_\_\_ to call his dog.
3. Maria watched the holiday lights \_\_\_\_\_ red and green.
4. Julie opened the flue inside her red brick \_\_\_\_\_.

©2018 Cassius One LLC --- [www.myvocabulary.com](http://www.myvocabulary.com)

**ROOTONYM®**  
by Jan & Carey Orr Cook



Study the definition. When you know the missing word, fill in the letter boxes and the sentence blanks.

Answers: reindeer, whistle, twinkle, chimney.