As told to
written for the
Beat Bambina
23 Park Row
New York City
Oct 23rd 1874

No. 8

Subject
My First Christmas
My first Christmas.

May my friends that Christmas I do not remember, and my excellent mother having, five years ago, gone to her heavenly home, she no longer here to describe what she saw. But we should have done so.

It was the sixty-three years next Christmas since that primary anniversary.

Let us see, sixty-three years ago on that Christmas Eve I was but forty-six days old.
June 17th, 1957

This is a handwritten letter from June 17th, 1957. It contains several paragraphs of text, but the handwriting is somewhat difficult to read. The content of the letter is not entirely clear from the image provided. The letter seems to be discussing personal matters and possibly some events or happenings.

The writer mentions dates and names, but due to the handwriting style, it's challenging to transcribe the exact details. The letter appears to be a personal note, possibly addressed to someone else, but the exact recipient is not discernible from the image.
always cheered and lifted up amid cultivated hills and valleys with God-given lake and river and mountains, all esthetically arranged or disarranged as Nature, the Lord's handmaid, never fails to do, and varying from day to day, from season to season in its drapery of green, gold, and gray.

The white house square and substantial with its arched door in the middle of the west front, its flat roof and top-balustrade, its green blinds and its string of outbuildings ending with the sizable old barn, looked as if it must have always been there, so essential was it to complete Nature's royal disorder and make an
Uninhabitable pictures, one
which it would trouble
the photographer to gather
and the great Bierstadt
would never undertake
to sketch it upon his
prolific canvas.

It was a grand old place but
the best part of it was
in doors. I do not refer to the
long passages and the rooms
but big enough for the cradle
which however, having
rocked an older brother for
two years, now that he was
promoted to the cradle bed
stood there in waiting. Who
but the fond mother recalled the
scene when that brother sat in
the cradle fast and with
his little feet over the side
rocked the sleeping babe!
the children all remember
the Mother Tears which
always even in age passed
filled her eyes at the mention
of his sweet life and early
death.
He was then, was ever after,
and is still her Angel Boy.
God is Love? He must before
This have given them, up there,
Someday, a loving reunion.
I believe it. You see, my good
friend, who was then in the
same room, in the same room that
Christmas ever. A Mother,
an angel brother, and a
gentle neighbor friend a
Mary or Martha in one who in
sweet sympathy gave a
month's precious time to
this young mother. Not
these tender mercies
rewarded. Oh, yes, in those old days where there was but little money all neighborly service was returned in kind or equivalent.

Behind the grand father, above three score and ten, a grand man, tall and straight and kind. Many times that day he had stopped his reading his paper, and with spectacles mounted above his forehead stepped softly from the kitchen to the mother's door to make some pleasant inquiry, as, “How fare you now Eliza? or how are the bairns?”

After the quiet answer of “all well, thank you Grandpa” he would add, for this was his formula, “let me have the two-years-old?”
white hair and f.

The Occidenal and the

Bright-eyed boy start off
together like Aeneas and Iulus
of old! Even the unequal
steps are as their expressions
of dependence & help, of love
and trust. It was a

on pen by grandfather's
side, holding his hand in
hand, holding his head.

The sun was upon
his knees. After Jellie had
left the vacanices there, I
became in time his

successor. I am sure I never
quite filled the place, no
more than I did in the

stiffer hearts of the

ancestral parents. How

could any one do that?

Yet, if you had such a
grand, beloved grandpa, you
ill understand how unconscious of any loss, I
gave to mount that throne
of privilege—grandpa's knees
for joy & instruction.
I must have imbied a
war spirit from him, for
he had participated as a seventeen-
year old lad by his father's side
in the closing campaigns of
The Revolution, and subsequently
taken part in Indian conflict.
An aged veteran, forgiven him my
friend, can but speak of what
he has seen & heard. He may outline
his time, but never to the
eager child who worshiped him!
You perceive how in the
developing child; history is
made to repeat itself.
The father in that house
had to go & come. The care of
his stock, which included his fine horses, his cattle & sheep; the getting up of the wood, its cutting & splitting & piling so as to be well seasoned for next winters use; the clearing of paths and roads from fresh fallen or drifting snow; and other necessary work, occupied his time from sunrise to sunset so that except of mornings & Sundays the mother did not enjoy much of his society. Only a farmer! No, he was more. He had much culture, loved poetry, and in fact all the good books he could procure & find time to read. His shaggy brow & keen blue eyes made him seem stern, & to his children's view mean their grandpa; yet his smile was
Something of his laugh clear and hearty. That father was, as I now know and love to record, a thrifty, self-sacrificing man, respected and trusted by his neighbors. He proved to take upon him, like so many around us today, burdens too heavy for his strength, and so more and more his life cut too soon in sheltering an ailing father and providing for wife and children. For the feeling father looked him home before my tenth year. His departure was my mother's second great sorrow. Oh, how many a handsome he appeared to me in those early days, particularly on Sunday morning as he emerged from his room ready for church. The
[Handwritten text not legible]
pick-suit of dark blue. The
entertaining coat with bright
buttons, the elegant watch
ribbon ornamented with buckle
and seal always pendant from
the waist-band. The high
collar & buna fede stock
these were the setting of the
noble New England man,
my father!
He was there at the
home-stand my first Christmas
eve. Now, friends, indulge
me—make a picture of
for yourself. The fire, wood
at coal or gas, is above the
hearth-stone there under
the lofty mantel. The brass
and iron, we have there—yet,
with their long knobs clear to
mirror your face. The line
could the shooting longs of Hare
sustain their load. The Grandpa
is in his corner, leaning
back in his chair, holding
the listing bag into his
sheltering arms. The young
mother opposite with a
pillow behind her shoulders,
shielding her pale face by a pumuloet
from the heat. She feels
like laying on her neighbor's
nurse and baby's bed. She
turns toward her husband and father, who
sits a little back where
the light from the chimney
shines full upon his smiling
face. A book & burning
bundle rest upon the small
table close to his right
hand. You can fill and the
juice in with her Exreat
bed in the corner. The portrait...
The text on the page is handwritten and not legible due to the quality of the image. It appears to be a page from a notebook or personal journal, but the content cannot be accurately transcribed.
on the wall, the beam an
a mirror to suit in proper
place.
Then is the little group, listen
for they are talking of the
morrow—of the season:
"It is Christmas eve,
Liza. At Peekskill where
lived so many years
with brother Murry, the
people made much of
Christmas!"
"So I have heard you say
before, Rawland?" she
said with a brightest smile.
"But our folks, they allow
think there is something in
these Christmas days.
Our Elder (The Baptist
Minister) calls keeping
Christmas a Romanish custom.
Grandpa interposes: "What of
Mr.

It is? Then can't be anything

many in remembering

whose birth day it is, or

in filling the youngest

empty stockings with

nice little presents!

"Oh, no—certainly not, the

father adds. When they

are a little bigger (he looked

fondly towards the happy

boy) then bundle in masses

off. When they are a little

bigger we will celebrate

the day. Episcopal &

Catholics mustn't be allowed
to monopolize all the

good things!"

Eliza smiled silently approved.

Surely in her heart she knew

the Elder might say.
constantly
considered as con
military and political
consideration with political
alliances and interests
in mind, and should be
with each country's
interests in mind. This
involves all the
consequences and
implications of such
alliances, and should
be understood and
carried forward.
It was a pretty Christmas even as it was. The home
picture had in it sacred
beauty & quiet joy. That
mother lived to participate
in over fifty Christmas
eves after that one, and to
see children, grandchildren
and great grandchildren
gather yearly around handsome
trees reflecting with bright
ornaments & aboundant gifts
or tables loaded with
Christmas presents; when jingle
ervoe & little hands clapping
your charming emphasis to
the happy occasions, but I
doubt if, on any
She was ever happier than
on that my "first Christmas night."
Oh. You meant "her first Christ-
for which I can remember!
Of course you did!
Well, we were in the same
house few years later. Randall
and I was in the Varsity
erable. Mother was at
work near the large table
listening to grandfather's
reading. "Oh, that is, myself
had gone to bed across the
hall in grandpa's bed.

It might have
been 1 O'clock. Suddenly
there was a sound of bells-
the bellman said, "a face
pressed against the window,
and I was frightened, but
a second later discovered
my husband." Hurried, it
was my father home from
Massachusetts A.T. He had been
gone two months on business.
it arrived unexpectedly to all except myself. It was a joyous surprise.

The horse got up and came to the living room in his night gown, rubbing his eyes. His father caught him in his arms and as soon as he welcomed was over, he brought a bundle from his valise and took off the wrapping. What it contained I could not tell, but it was a Maltese map of the ancient city, and a beautiful book, "Oedipus in thebes," with the nicest sort of cover. My heart was in my throat with excitement. The world has been enough.
[Handwritten text not legible]
Illustrations of short stories. Getting much trouble to keep mother to take care of me after that for many days. I would lie on the floor by the hearth, knitting up my hands with face downward intent on the pictures in that book, and spelling out the stories. Of boys and girls from 8 to 14 years old are as mischievous and happy as I was now those Christmas gifts. I hope they will not fail to be supplied. The rich boys have always had so many gifts that they do not seem to care for them—certainly not so much! Well, my friend.
Tell them to look around
still they find a youngster
like Ols Hans who was born
in the midst of luxuries
unless you take account
of making Restoration
Farm products, and see
how his heart will beat
and his eyes glisten as
you put into his hands
to be, all his own, a
rich Christmas box.
Rich children
will find a joyful
expectation in giving.
If they can find a way
as the St. Paul says,
"to give with simplicity!"

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by

Maj. Gen. O. Howard
U. S. Army

Co. Island N. Y.
October 23, 1893

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