

Levi Pennington

People

1974

Christmas, 1974

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Recommended Citation

Pennington, Levi T., "Christmas, 1974" (1974). *Levi Pennington*. 428.
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Christmas 1974

Mary, the Mother of Jesus,
To My Dear Son John, the Beloved Disciple

The time for my departure from this life
Is drawing near. This world of toil and strife
And inward peace will very soon be gone.
Another world my eyes will look upon.
But ere this world scene I no more shall see
I wish to send my final word to thee.

My heart goes out to thee when I recall
The awful day when thou wast made my son.
We stood beside the cross and witnessed all
The agony of God's most holy one
Dying to save from sin's curse every other.
He turned his tortured, pain-scarred face to thee
And said in love to thee, "Behold thy mother."
Such love in death I ne'er again should see.

And then He turned to me, and with a smile
On that dear face of Him, God's chosen one,
He looked at me with love a little while,
And then He said, "Woman, behold thy son."

I cannot tell what it has meant to me
To have thy love and care from that time on.
(We waited by the cross at last to see
His last move — his committal — He was gone.)

Taken to thy blest home, from then till now
Thou'st been a dear and loving son to me,
And I am certain that thou knowest how
I've sought to show true mother love to thee.

I shared thy joy when my blest Son arose —
He could not long be held by any tomb.
I shared with thee when we both met with those
Received the Spirit in that upper room.

I shared with thee thy work in Palestine,
In Ephesus and elsewhere, and together
We carried on the work, both thine and mine,
In blazing sunshine and in wintry weather.

The happiest part of every busy day
Was when we sat together and conversed
About the things that happened on our way,
The happiest and most blessed — and the worst.

We talked of work in many a land and clime,
The happiest country and the most forlorn,
But oftenest we talked about that time
When Jesus Christ, my Son, our Lord, was born.

No man can understand what childbirth means
To any woman who becomes a mother;
No other woman knows what Christ's birth means,
So widely different from any other.

It was great news, that glorious evangel,
One thing I've never told to any other.
Gabriel, th' annunciation angel,
Made a blest call that night on Jesus' mother.

Joseph was outside hearing the angel choir
Singing again, again and yet again
In tones most sweet and higher, ever higher,
"Glory to God, and His goodwill to men."

I cannot tell thee what the angel said.
It was a message meant for me alone,
As bending o'er the holy babe's straw bed
He gave me greetings from th' Almighty's throne.

Not of the past alone I'd write to thee.
The present and the future we must face,
With God's strong Spirit guiding thee and me
Whatever trials yet in time and space.

Only a few days now are left to me;
My call I hear to my eternal home.
It may be many years thou yet shalt see,
But soon or late the earth life's end will come.

And we shall meet, according to God's word,
And I shall see again my own dear Son,
And we shall greet again my Son, our Lord,
With all the blest eternity begun.

God calls me; I can not much longer tarry.
With all my heart's fond love,
Your Mother, Mary.

L.T.P.

*With best wishes for Christmas, the New Year and all the years
that are to be.*

Levi T. Pennington.

*Dear Frank and Genevieve:—
Love and best wishes
always. The college boys
are not the only ones who'll
miss you.
Levi T.*