



J.R.R.
TOLKIEN

LETTERS FROM
FATHER CHRISTMAS

Edited by BAILLIE TOLKIEN

J.R.R. TOLKIEN

*Letters From
Father Christmas*

Edited by Baillie Tolkien



HarperCollinsPublishers

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Introduction

To the children of J. R. R. Tolkien, the interest and importance of Father Christmas extended beyond his filling of their stockings on Christmas Eve; for he wrote a letter to them every year, in which he described in words and pictures his house, his friends, and the events, hilarious or alarming, at the North Pole. The first of the letters came in 1920, when John, the eldest, was three years old; and for over twenty years, through the childhoods of the three other children, Michael, Christopher and Priscilla, they continued to arrive each Christmas. Sometimes the envelopes, dusted with snow and bearing Polar postage stamps, were found in the house on the morning after his visit; sometimes the postman brought them; and the letters that the children wrote themselves vanished from the fireplace when no one was about.

As time went on, Father Christmas' household became larger, and whereas at first little is heard of anyone else except the North Polar Bear, later on there appear Snow-elves, Red Gnomes, Snow-men, Cave-bears, and the Polar Bear's nephews, Paksu and Valkotukka, who came on a visit and never went away. But the Polar Bear remained Father Christmas' chief assistant, and the chief cause of the disasters that led to muddles and deficiencies in the Christmas stockings; and sometimes he wrote on the letters his comments in angular capitals.

Eventually Father Christmas took on as his secretary an Elf named Ilbereth, and in the later letters Elves play an important part in the defence of Father Christmas' house and store-cellars against attacks by Goblins.

In this book are presented numerous examples of Father Christmas' shaky handwriting, and almost all the pictures that he sent are here reproduced; and also included is the alphabet that the Polar Bear devised from the Goblin drawings on the walls of the caves where he was lost, and the letter that he sent to the children written in it.

FROM FATHER • CHRISTMAS



1920

for Christmas

NORTH POLE

22 DEC, 1920



Mrs Tolkien :

Master John Francis Reuel Tolkien
1 Alfred Street
St Giles
Oxford
ENGLAND

OXFORD

Christmas House
North Pole



1920

Dear John

Love to
Daddy, mummy
Michael & Auntie
& Mary

I heard you ask daddy
what I was like & where
I lived. I have drawn
ME & My House for you.
Take care of the picture.
I am just off now for
Oxford with my bundle
of toys - some for you.
Hope I shall arrive in
time: the snow is very
thick at the NORTH POLE
tonight: Yr loving Gr. Girl.

Christmas House,

North Pole

22nd December 1920

Dear John

I heard you ask daddy what I was like and where I lived. I have drawn me and my house for you. Take care of the picture. I am just off now for Oxford with my bundle of toys - some for you. Hope I shall arrive in time: the snow is very thick at the North Pole tonight. Your loving Father Christmas

1923

DEC. 23

1923



Master John Francis Tolkien
11. St Marks Terrace
Woodhouse Lane
Leeds


Christmas Eve: 1923

North Pole

My dear John

It is very cold today and
my hand is very shaky and
I am nineteen hundred and twenty
~~four~~ ^{not seven!} years old on Christmas day,

It is older than your great-grandfather,
so I can't stop the pen working,
but I hear that you are getting
so good at reading that I expect
you will be able to read my letter

I send you lots of love and lots for
Michael too and Lots of Brick too
(which are called that because there
are lots more for you to have next year
if you let me know in good time)
I think they are prettier and stronger
and tidier than Peabrix, so I hope
you will like them. Now I
must go; it is a lovely fine night
and I have got hundreds of miles
to go before morning - there is such
a lot to do.  A cold kiss from
St. Nicholas. Christmas

North Pole

Christmas Eve: 1923

My dear John,

It is very cold today and my hand is very shaky—I am nineteen hundred and twenty four, no! seven! years old on Christmas Day,—lots older than your great-grandfather, so I can't stop the pen wobbling, but I hear that you are getting so good at reading that I expect you will be able to read my letter.

I send you lots of love (and lots for Michael too) and Lotts Bricks too (which are called that because there are lots more for you to have next year if you let me know in good time). I think they are prettier and stronger and tidier than Picabrix. So I hope you will like them.

Now I must go; it is a lovely fine night and I have got hundreds of miles to go before morning—there is such a lot to do.

A cold kiss from

Father Nicholas Christmas

1924



Dec 23. 1924

Michael Hilary

with love
from

Father, Christmas

I am
very busy this year: no
time for letter. Lots of
love. Hope the engine
goes well. Take care
of it. A big kiss



Dear Michael Hilary

I am very busy this year: No time for letter. Lots of love. Hope the engine goes well. Take care of it. A big kiss.

with love from

Father Christmas


Dec 23, 1924

John Francis

with love

from

Father Christmas

Dear John Hope you
have a happy Christ-
mas. Only time
for a short letter, my
sleigh is waiting. Lots
of new stockings to fill this
year. Hope you will like
station of things. A
big kiss 

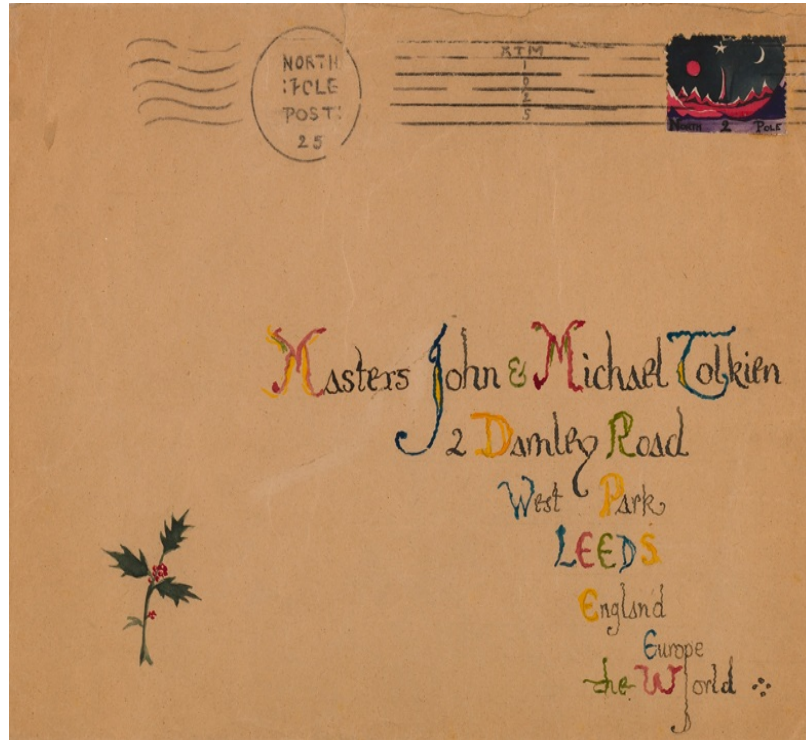
December 23rd 1924

Dear John

Hope you have a happy Christmas. only time for a short letter, my sleigh is waiting. Lots of new stockings to fill this year. Hope you will like station and things. A big kiss.

with love from
Father Christmas

1925



Xmas
1925

Cliff House
Top of the world
Near the North Pole

Xmas
1925

My dear boys
 I am dreadfully busy this year - it makes my hand more shaky than ever when I think of it and I don't very rich in fact awful things have been happening and some of the presents have got spoilt and I haven't got the North Polar bear to help me and I have had to make haste just before Christmas so you can imagine what a state everything is in and you will see why I have a new address and why I can't write a letter between you both. It all happened like this: one very windy day last November my hood blew off and went and stuck on the top of the North Cape. I told him not to but the N.P. Bear climbed up to the third top to get it down and he did. The pole broke in the middle and fell on the roof of my house and the N.P. Bear fell through the hole it made into the dining room with my hood over his nose and all the snow fell off the roof into the house and melted and put out all the fires and ran down into the cellars where I was collecting this year's presents and the N.P. Bears leg got broken. He is I will again need but I was so cross with him that he said he won't try to help me again. I expect his temper is hurt and will be mended about Christmas. I send you a picture of the accident and of my new house on the cliff above the N.P. with beautiful colors in the cliffs. I can't read my old shaky writing I am 75 years old he must get his father's. What's Michael going to learn to read and write his own letters to me. I love to hear from you both and Christopher whose name is rather like mine.

That's all: Good bye * Father Christmas *

Cliff House,
Top of the World,
Near the North Pole
Christmas 1925

My dear boys,

I am dreadfully busy this year—it makes my hand more shaky than ever when I think of it—and not very rich; in fact awful things have been happening, and some of the presents have got spoilt, and I haven't got the North Polar bear to help me, and I have had to move house just before Christmas, so you can imagine what a state everything is in, and you will see why I have a new address, and why I can only write one letter between you both.

It all happened like this: one very windy day last November my hood blew off and went and stuck on the top of the North Pole. I told him not to, but the North Polar Bear climbed up to the thin top to get it down—and he did. The pole broke in the middle and fell on the roof of my house, and the North Polar Bear fell through the hole it made into the dining room with my hood over his nose, and all the snow fell off the roof into the house and melted and put out all the fires and ran down into the cellars, where I was collecting this year's presents, and the North Polar Bear's leg got broken.

He is well again now, but I was so cross with him that he says he won't try to help me again—I expect his temper is hurt, and will be mended by next Christmas.

I send you a picture of the accident and of my new house on the cliffs above the North Pole (with beautiful cellars in the cliffs). If John can't read my old shaky writing (one thousand nine hundred and twenty-five years old) he must get his father to. When is Michael going to learn to read, and write his own letters to me? Lots of love to you both and Christopher, whose name is rather like mine.

That's all: Good Bye

Father Christmas

1925

The moonlight

These stars that!



this
star was
red when
Pete swapped

It's better.

He's angry

my window

windows of
new colors

my window can
climb up the
cliff

The N. B. Bear
with my
head
and a bit
of the roof

hangs out
on the roof

See where
Pete swapped
on the old
house and
red

The stars
are yellow
stars

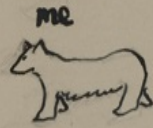
my old house

me being

12

13

P.S.

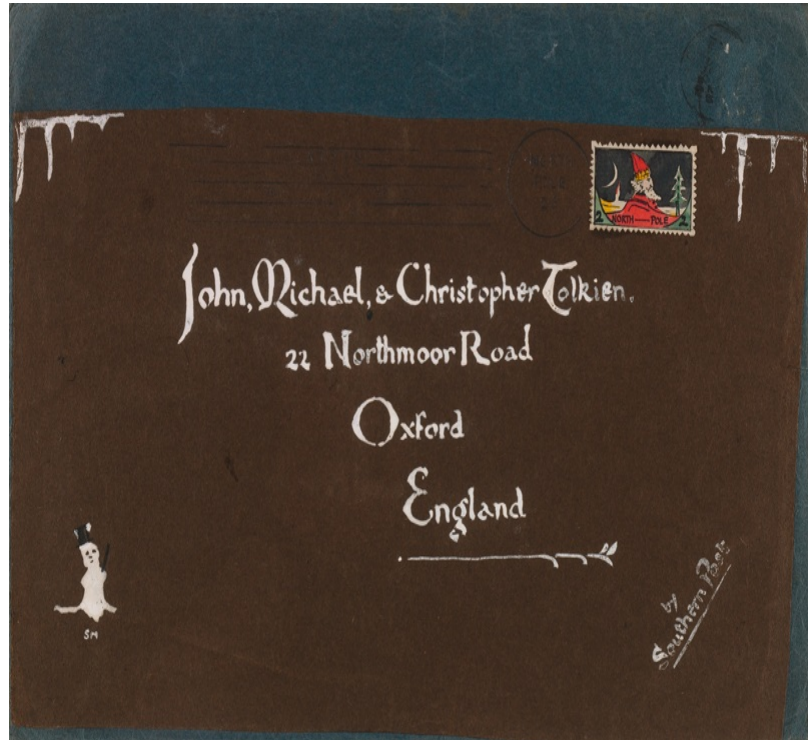


FR Christmas was
in great hurry - told
me to put in one of his
magic wishing crackers.
As you pull, wish, & see
if it doesn't come true,
Excuse thick writing
I have a fat paw.
I help Fr. C. with his
packing: I live with
him. I am the
GREAT (Polar) BEAR

P. S.

Father Christmas was in a great hurry—told me to put in one of his magic wishing crackers. As you pull, wish, and see if it doesn't come true. Excuse thick writing I have a fat paw. I help Father Christmas with his packing: I live with him. I am the GREAT (Polar) BEAR

1926



Christmas
1926

Camp House Top of the World

Near the NORTH POLE

Monday Dec 1926 (26th)

My dear boys,

I am more shaky than usual this year. The North Polar Bear's vault! It was the biggest most monstrous snowdrift I ever turned the North Pole SLACK & broke all the stars out of place, broke the moon into four - and the stars fell into my back garden. He ate quite a lot of my Christmas cakes before he said he felt better & I climbed back to mend it and get the stars tidy. Then I found out that the remainder had broken loose. They were running all over the country, breaking reins and ropes & chasing presents up in the air. They were all packed up to start with, yes it only happened this morning; it was a sleigh load of desirable things which I always send to England early. These years are not badly damaged. But isn't the N.P.B. silly? And he isn't a bit clever! Of course he did it - you remember I had some last year because of him? The tap for turning on the Pory Pory Mills fireworks is still in the cellar of my old house. The N.P.B. knew he must never touch it. Let it off on special days like Christmas. He says he thought it was cut off since we moved - anyway he was nosing round the mine this morning soon after breakfast, he hides things to eat there and tramped on all the Pory Pory lights for two years in one go. You have never heard or seen anything like it. I have tried to draw a picture of it, but I am too shaky to do it properly and you can't paint freezing light can you? I think the N.P.B. had squint the picture rather - of course he can't read with those great fat paws - by going and putting a bit of his own about me chasing the remainder and him laughing. He did laugh too so did I when I saw him.

rude. nro
I can - and write
without shaking

PTO

begin to leave reindeer, and making his nice white paths

FATHER X. had to hurry away and leave me to finish. He is old and gets worried when funny things happen. You would have laughed too! I think it is good of me laughing. It was a lovely firework. The reindeer will run quick to England this year. They are still frightened! ~~~~~

I must go and help pack. I don't know what F.C. would do without me. He always forgets what a lot of packing I do for him. ~~~~~

The Snow Man is addressing our envelopes this year. He is F.C.'s gardener - but we don't get much but snowdrops and frost-ferns to grow here. He always writes in white, just with his finger. ~~~~~

A merry Christmas to you from NPB.

And love from Father Christmas
to you all.



Cliff House,
Top of the World,
Near the North Pole
Monday December 20th 1926

My dear boys,

I am more shaky than usual this year. The North Polar Bear's fault! It was the biggest bang in the world, and the most monstrous firework there ever has been. It turned the North Pole BLACK and shook all the stars out of place, broke the moon into four—and the Man in it fell into my back garden. He ate quite a lot of my Christmas chocolates before he said he felt better and climbed back to mend it and get the stars tidy.

Then I found out that the reindeer had broken loose. They were running all over the country, breaking reins and ropes and tossing presents up in the air. They were all packed up to start, you see—yes it only happened this morning: it was a sleighload of chocolate things, which I always send to England early. I hope yours are not badly damaged.

But isn't the North Polar Bear silly? And he isn't a bit sorry! Of course he did it—you remember I had to move last year because of him? The tap for turning on the Rory Bory Aylis fireworks is still in the cellar of my old house. The North Polar Bear knew he must never, never touch it. I only let it off on special days like Christmas. He says he thought it was cut off since we moved.

Anyway, he was nosing round the ruins this morning soon after breakfast (he hides things to eat there) and turned on all the Northern Lights for two years in one go. You have never heard or seen anything like it. I have tried to draw a picture of it; but I am too shaky to do it properly and you can't paint fizzing light can you?

I think the Polar Bear has spoilt the picture rather—of course he can't draw with those great fat paws—

Rude! I can—and write without shaking.

by going and putting a bit of his own about me chasing the reindeer and him laughing. He did laugh too. So did I when I saw him trying to draw reindeer, and inking his nice white paws.

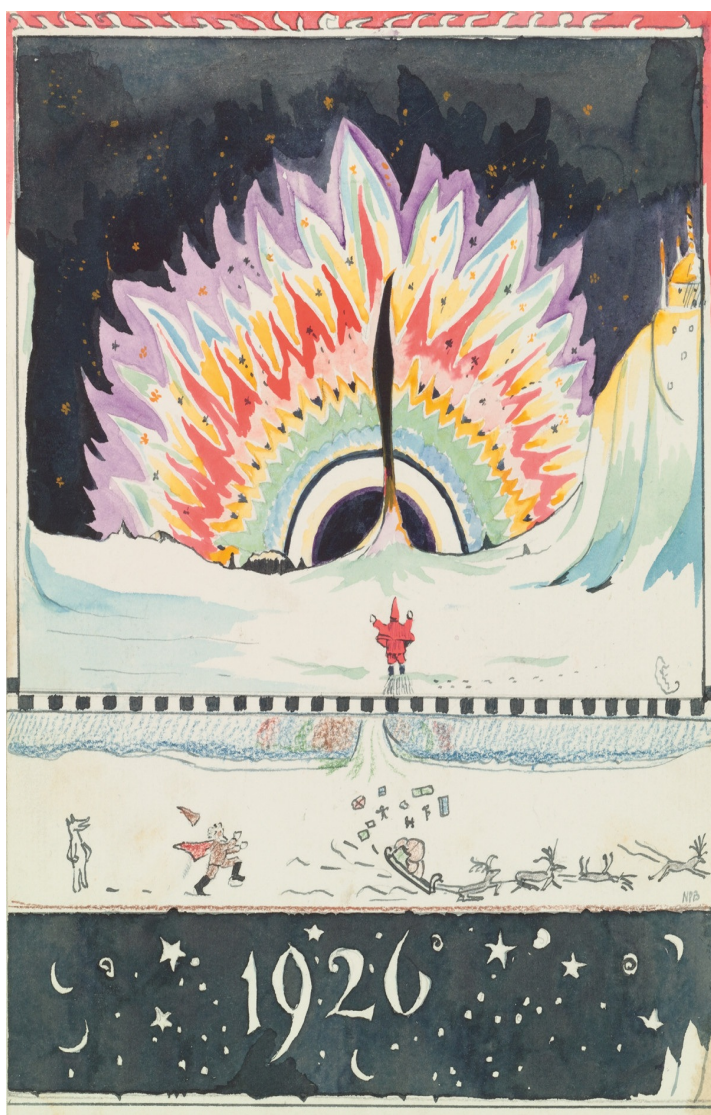
Father Christmas had to hurry away and leave me to finish. He is old and gets worried when funny things happen. You would have laughed too! I think it is good of me laughing. It was a lovely firework. The reindeer will run quick to England this year. They are still frightened!...

I must go and help pack. I don't know what Father Christmas would do without me. He always forgets what a lot of packing I do for him...

The Snow Man is addressing our envelopes this year. He is Father Christmas's gardener—but we don't get much but snowdrops and frost-ferns to grow here. He always writes in white, just with his finger...

A merry Christmas to you from North Polar Bear

And love from Father Christmas to you all.



1927



Cliff House
Top o' the Wald
near the
North Pole

Wednesday December 21st 1927

Dear people - John Richard Christopher, also Klaus, also Sammy, also
Auntie Annie - also Dolly, there seem to get most of me of you every year &
get the most of me: still I hope that I have managed to bring you all
something you wanted, though not everything you asked for (Michael & Christopher!
I haven't heard from John this year, I suppose he is fishing too big and won't write home
with his steady work) It has been so bitter at the N.P. lately that the N.P.D.
(you know who I mean!) has spent most of the time in sleep and has been less use-
ful than usual this Christmas. The N.P.D. became colder than any cold thing ever has been
when the N.P.D. put his nose against it - took the skin off - that is why it is bandaged with
red flannel in the picture - (but the bandage has slipped). Why did he? I don't know, but he
is always putting his nose where it ought not to be - into my cups for instance -
so it has been very dark here since winter began. We haven't seen the Sun of course
for three months but there were (Northern) lights this year - you remember the royal accident
(and distant friend) the GREAT BEAR. The N.P.D. has got his car on
his hind legs and can't do his packing job, but it doesn't work as well - you can see that by my
picture. The North Pole Bear has not really been any more sensible this year - yesterday he
was snuggling the Snow Man in the garden & pushed him over the edge of the cliff
so that he fell into my sleigh at the bottom he broke lots of things - one of them was him-
self. I used some of what was left of him to paint my white picture. We shall have
to make ourselves a new garden when we are less here.
The SUN in the MOON paid me a visit to the other day - a fortnight ago exactly
December 14th - he often does about this time as he gets lonely in the Moon, and we make
him a nice little plum pudding (he is so fond of things with plums in!). His conduct here
was as usual & the N.P.D. made him play "Snoddracens" to warm them. Of course
he burnt them, & then he licked them, and then he stole the brandy, and then the Bear
gave him lots more, and he went fast asleep on the sofa. Then I went down into the
cellars to make crackers, and he rolled off the sofa and the wicked bear pushed him
underneath & snuggled about him! He can never be away a whole night from the
moon, but he was this time. Suddenly the Snow Man (he wasn't broken then)
rushed in out of the garden, he had just altered his mind, and said the moon was going out!
The Drums had come out (they were making an awful smoke and snoring). We
rolled him out and snuggled him & he simply whizzed back, but it was ages before he got
things quite cleared up.

These are
blows which Pa
Ch could not see
may be



I believe he had to let large out of his simple, best of breeding medicine
before he could drive the doctors back into their holes and that is why it is as
easy as cold as iron here - The Polar Bear only laughs when it is hit
He curls up in my hearth and counts down things but says

All messengers tell me that you have somebody from Iceland staying with
you That is not far from where those mountains are called. People don't
know you and keep a thing at bay for their very jolly Christmas trees. My usual way
is down through Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, and then back through
Germany, Northern France, Belgium, land to into England, or on the way back
I pass over the sea and sometimes Iceland, you can see the twinkling lights faint
in the valleys under their mountains. But I go by quick as my reindeer gallop as hard
as they can there - they always say they are frightened & I know my gipsy will
go a thousand miles.

This must be all: I have written you a very long letter this year to make
up for the dark card - there was nothing in mine, but dark & mine and
stars.

Love to you all, and happiness New Year

Yours loving
Father Christmas



* 5. This is the Christ-
mas's hearth and I
am not on it. NB

My notes. NB.

* 1. Of course you
know, and every body does
keep most of the time to
winter - especially P.C.

* 2. That's because
I am hungry

* 3. I have been
perfectly sensible and have learnt to
write with a pen in my mouth
instead of a paintbrush.

* 4. I have never been expected to look
after the man in the picture before. Just very nice to have
myself under the top.



Cliff House,
Top o'the World,
near the North Pole
Wednesday December 21st 1927

My dear people: there seem to get more and more of you every year.

I get poorer and poorer: still I hope that I have managed to bring you all something you wanted, though not everything you asked for (Michael and Christopher! I haven't heard from John this year. I suppose he is growing too big and won't even hang up his stocking soon).

It has been so bitter at the North Pole lately that the North Polar Bear has spent most of the time asleep and has been less use than usual this Christmas.

Everybody does sleep most of the time here in winter—especially Father Christmas.

The North Pole became colder than any cold thing ever has been, and when the North Polar Bear put his nose against it—it took the skin off: now it is bandaged with red flannel. Why did he? I don't know, but he is always putting his nose where it oughtn't to be—into my cupboards for instance.

That's because I am hungry

Also it has been very dark here since winter began. We haven't seen the Sun, of course, for three months, but there are no Northern Lights this year—you remember the awful accident last year? There will be none again until the end of 1928. The North Polar Bear has got his cousin (and distant friend) the Great Bear to shine extra bright for us, and this week I have hired a comet to do my packing by, but it doesn't work as well.

The North Polar Bear has not really been any more sensible this year:

I have been perfectly sensible, and have learnt to write with a pen in my mouth instead of a paintbrush.

Yesterday he was snowballing the Snow Man in the garden and pushed him over the edge of the cliff so that he fell into my sleigh at the bottom and broke lots of things—one of them was himself. I used some of what was left of him to paint my white picture. We shall have to make ourselves a new gardener when we are less busy.

The Man in the Moon paid me a visit the other day—a fortnight ago exactly—he often does about this time, as he gets lonely in the Moon, and we make him a nice little Plum Pudding (he is so fond of things with plums in!)

His fingers were cold as usual, and the North Polar Bear made him play 'snapdragons' to warm them. Of course he burnt them, and then he licked them, and then he liked the brandy, and then the Bear gave him lots more, and he went fast asleep on the sofa. Then I went down into the cellars to make crackers, and he rolled off the sofa, and the wicked bear pushed him underneath and forgot all about him! He can never be away a whole night from the moon; but he was this time.

I have never been expected to look after the Man in the Moon before. I was very nice to him, and he was very comfy under the sofa.

Suddenly the Snow Man (he wasn't broken then) rushed in out of the garden, next day just after teatime, and said the moon was going out! The dragons had come out and were making an awful smoke and smother. We rolled him out and shook him and he simply whizzed back, but it was ages before he got things quite cleared up.

I believe he had to let loose one of his simply terrificallest freezing magics before he could drive the dragons back into their holes, and that is why it has got so cold down here.

The Polar Bear only laughs when I tell him it's his fault, and he curls up on my hearthrug and won't do anything but snore.

My messengers told me that you have somebody from Iceland staying with you. That is not so far from where I live, and nearly as cold. People don't hang up stockings there, and I usually pass by in a hurry, though I sometimes pop down and leave a thing or two for their very jolly Christmas Trees.

My usual way is down through Norway, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, and then back through Germany, Northern France, Belgium, and so into England: and on the way home I pass over the sea, and sometimes Iceland and I can see the twinkling lights faint in the valleys under their mountains. But I go by quick, as my reindeer gallop as hard as they can there—they always say they are frightened a volcano or a geyser will go off underneath them.

This must be all: I have written you a very long letter this year as there was nothing to draw, but dark and snow and stars.

Love to you all, and happiness next year.

Your loving Father Christmas



LOVE PB.

B. x Special messenger
direct

VERY URGENT

The Tolkien's
20 Northmoore Road
OXFORD
ENGLAND

DEAR LIA.
NOT MY FAULT
FOR CHRISTMAS
FORGOT TO SEND
THIS - AND HE COULD
NOT FIND ANY STAMPS

Thursday December 20th
1928

MY DEAR BOYS

ANOTHER CHRISTMAS and I am another year older—and so are you. I feel quite well all the same—dearly nice of MICHAEL to ask—and not quite so shaky. But that is because we have got all the lightning and heat (ing) right again after the cold dark year we had in 1927—do you remember about it? And I expect you remember whose fault it was? What do you think the poor dear old bear has been and done this time? Nothing as bad as letting off all the lights. Only fell from top to bottom of the main stairs on Thursday! We were beginning to get the first lot of parcels down out of the store rooms into the hall. PH would insist on taking an enormous pile on his head as well as lots in his arms. Bang Rumble Clatter Crash! awful moanings and growlings: I ran out on to the landing and saw he had fallen from top to bottom onto his nose—leaving a trail of balls bundles parcels & things all the way down—and he had fallen on top of some and smashed them. I hope you got none of these by accident? I have drawn you a picture—of it all. PH was rather grumpy at my drawing it: he says my Christmas pictures always make her & him & that one year he will stand out drawn by himself (or me being idiotic (out of course I never am, and he can't draw well enough)). He jiggled my arm and sent the little picture at the bottom of the moon

WOO LEFT THE SOAP ON THE STAIRS? NOYNE!

OF COURSE NATURAL

YES I CAN BREW FLAG AT END.

laughing and shaking his fist at it. When he had picked him-
self up he ran out of doors & wouldn't help clear up because I
sat on the stairs and laughed as soon as I found there was not much
damage done - that is why the moon smiled: as you can see, but the
part showing PB angry was cut off because he smiled at it.

But anyway I thought you would like a picture of the INSIDE of my
new big house for a change. This is the chief hall under the largest dome,
where we pile the presents usually ready to load on the sleighs at the door's.

PB & I built a nearly all ourselves, and laid all the blue and mauve tiles
the banisters and roof are not quite straight, but it doesn't really matter.

I painted the pictures on the walls of the trees and stars and suns and
moons. Then I said to PB "I shall leave the freeze to you." He said
"I should have thought there was enough freeze outside - and your
colours inside, all purple-grey-blue-pale green are cold enough too."
I said "don't be a silly bear. do your best, there's a good old polar" - and
look at the result!! Icicles all round the hall to make a freeze (he
can't spell very well), and fearful bright colour to make a warm freeze!!

Well my dears I hope you will like the things I am bringing: nearly all you
asked for and lots of other little things you didn't, which I thought of
at the last minute. I hope you will share the railway things and train
and animals often, and not think they are absolutely only for the one whose
stocking they were in. Take care of them for they are some of my very
best things. Love to Chris: love to Michael: love to John who
must be getting very big as he doesn't write to me anymore (so I simply
had to guess pants - I hope they were all right: PB chose them; he says
he knows what John likes because J. likes bears)

Your loving
FATHER CHRISTMAS

AND
MY LOVE
PB

NOT MY
FAULT
P.C. DID
DAMNAGE!

ROT

Top o' the World,
North Pole
Thursday December 20th 1928

My dear boys,

Another Christmas and I am another year older—and so are you. I feel quite well all the same—very nice of Michael to ask—and not quite so shaky. But that is because we have got all the lighting and heating right again after the cold dark year we had in 1927—you remember about it?

And I expect you remember whose fault it was? What do you think the poor dear old bear has been and done this time? Nothing as bad as letting off all the lights. Only fell from top to bottom of the main stairs on Thursday!

Who'd left the soap on the stairs? Not me!

We were beginning to get the first lot of parcels down out of the storerooms into the hall. Polar Bear would insist on taking an enormous pile on his head as well as lots in his arms. Bang Rumble Clatter Crash! Awful moanings and growlings.

I ran out on to the landing and saw he had fallen from top to bottom on to his nose leaving a trail of balls, bundles, parcels and things all the way down—and he had fallen on top of some and smashed them. I hope you got none of these by accident? I have drawn you a picture of it all. Polar Bear was rather grumpy at my drawing it:

Of course, naturally.

He says my Christmas pictures always make fun of him and that one year he will send one drawn by himself of me being idiotic (but of course I never am, and he can't draw well enough).

Yes I can. I drew the flag at the end.

He juggled my arm and spoilt the little picture at the bottom of the moon laughing and Polar Bear shaking his fist at it.

When he had picked himself up he ran out of doors and wouldn't help clear up because I sat on the stairs and laughed as soon as I found there was not much damage done—that is why the moon smiled: but the part showing Polar Bear angry was cut off because he smudged it.

But anyway I thought you would like a picture of the inside of my new big house for a change. The chief hall is under the largest dome, where we pile the presents usually ready to load on the sleighs at the doors. Polar Bear and I built it nearly all ourselves, and laid all the blue and mauve tiles. The banisters and roof are not quite straight...

Not my fault. Father Christmas did the banisters.

...but it doesn't really matter. I painted the pictures on the walls of the trees and stars and suns and moons. Then I said to Polar Bear, "I shall leave the frieze (F. R. I. E. Z. E.) to you."

He said, “I should have thought there was enough freeze outside—and your colours inside, all purply-grey-y-blueey-pale greeny are cold enough too.”

I said, “Don’t be a silly bear: do your best, there’s a good old polar”—and what a result!! Icicles all round the hall to make a freeze (F. R. E. E. Z. E.) (he can’t spell very well), and fearful bright colour to make a warm freeze!!!

Well, my dears, I hope you will like the things I am bringing: nearly all you asked for and lots of other little things you didn’t, and which I thought of at the last minute. I hope you will share the railway things and farm and animals often, and not think they are absolutely only for the one whose stocking they were in. Take care of them, for they are some of my very best things.

Love to Chris: love to Michael: love to John who must be getting very big as he doesn’t write to me any more (so I simply had to guess paints—I hope they were all right: Polar Bear chose them; he says he knows what John likes because John likes bears).

Your loving Father Christmas

And my love, Polar Bear



BOXING DAY
1928

I am frightfully
sorry — I gave
this to the P.M. in
post and he forgot
all about it! We
found it on the hall
table to day.

But you must forgive
him: he has worked
very hard for me & is
dreadfully tired. We
have had a busy Christ-
mas. Very windy here:
It blew several sleighs
over before they could
start.

Love again

Fr X

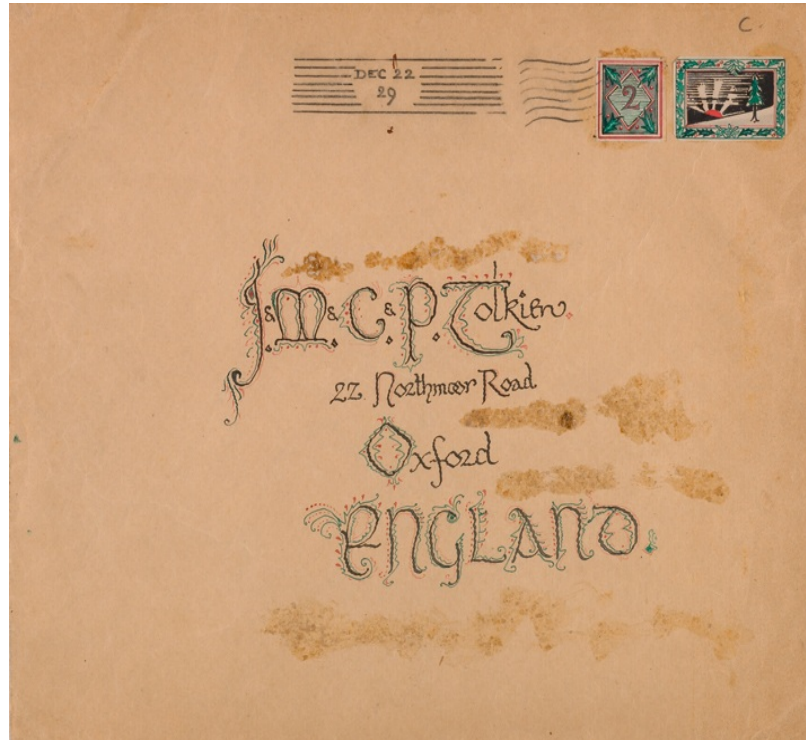
Boxing Day, 1928

I am frightfully sorry—I gave this to the Polar Bear to post and he forgot all about it! We found it on the hall table—today.

But you must forgive him: he has worked very hard for me and is dreadfully tired. We have had a busy Christmas. Very windy here. It blew several sleighs over before they could start.

Love again, Father Christmas

1929



PS I LIKE LETTERS AND THINK
CRISPOFERS AR NICE.

NOV 1920

DEAR BOYS

MY PAW IS BETTER I WAS CUTTING CHRISTMAS
TREES WEN I HURT IT. DONT YOU THINK MY WRITING
IS MUKH BETTER TOO? FATHER X IS VERY BISI
ALREADY. SO AM I WE HAVE HAD HEVY SNOW AND
SUM OF OUR MESSENGERS GOT BVERRIED AND SUM
LOST: THAT IS WHI YOU HAVE NOT HERD LATELY.
LOVE TO JOHN FOR HIS BIRTHDAY FATHER X SAYS
MI ENGLISH SPELLING IS NOT GOOD. I KANT HELP IT. WE
DONT SPEAK ENGLISH HERE, ONLY ARKTIK (WHICH YOU

DONT KNOW. WE ALSO MAKE OUR LETTERS DIFFERENT
MI HAVE MADE MINE LIKE ARKTIK LETTERS FOR YOU TO
SEE. WE ALWAYS RIME A FOR T AND V FOR U.
THIS IS SUM ARKTIK LANGWIDGE WICH MEANS
"GOOD BY TILL I SEE YOU NEXT AND I HOPE IT
WILL BEE SOON." MIARA MESTA AN NI VÉVA NYÉ
ÉNTO, YA RANO NEA

P. B.

MY REAL NAME IS KARHU BUT I DONT TELL
MOST PEEPLE.

MI PAW

November 1929

Dear boys,

My paw is better. I was cutting Christmas trees when I hurt it. Don't you think my writing is much better too? Father Christmas is very busy already. So am I. We have had heavy snow and some of our messengers got buried and some lost: that is why you have not heard lately.

Love to John for his birthday. Father Christmas says my English spelling is not good. I can't help it. We don't speak English here, only Arktik (which you don't know. We also make our letters different—I have made mine like Arktik letters for you to see. We always write for T and V for U. This is some Arktik language which means "Goodbye till I see you next and I hope it will be soon." - Mára mesta an ni véla tye ento, ya rato nea.

P. B.

My real name is Karhu but I don't tell most people.

P.S. I like letters and think Cristofers are nice


"Top of the World"
North Pole
Xmas 1929.

Dear Boys & Girls

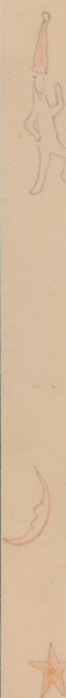
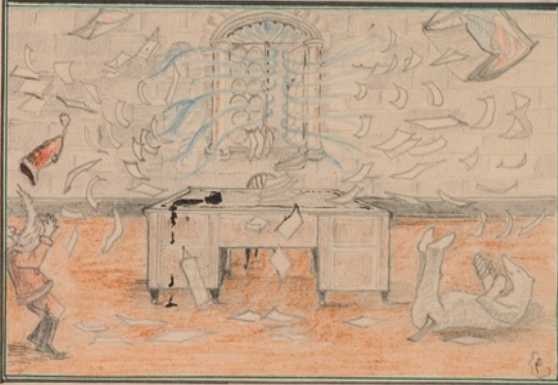
It is a light Christmas again I am glad to say
the Northern lights have been specially good.

There is a lot to tell you. You have heard
that the Great Polar Bear chopped us down when he
was cutting Christmas Trees. His right
one - I mean not his left - of course it
was wrong to cut it - a pity too for he spent
a lot of the Summer learning to write
better so as to help me with my winter letters.

We had a Bonfire this year (to please the
PS) to celebrate the coming in of winter.
The Snow-elves let off all the
rockets together which surprised us both. I have
tried to draw you a picture of it but really there
were hundreds of rockets. You can't see
the elves at all against the Snow background.
The Bonfire made a hole in the ice & woke
up the Great Seal who happened to be under-
neath. The PS let off 20,000 silver

Sparks afterwards—used up all my stock,
so that is why I had none to send you.
Then he went for a holiday!!!—to North Norway
& stayed with a wood-cutter called **Ola**—
came back with his paw all bandaged just at the
beginning of our busy times. There
seem more children than ever  in
England, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, & Germany
which are the countries I specially look after
(of course North America & Canada)—
not to speak of getting stuff down to the South
Pole for children who expect to be looked after
though they have gone to live in **New Zealand** or
Australia or **South Africa** or **China**. It is
a good thing clocks don't tell the same time
all over the world or I should never get round, al-
though when my magic is strongest—at Xmas—I can do
about a **thousand** stockings a minute, if I have it all
planned out beforehand. You could hardly guess the enor-
mous piles of lists I make out—I seldom get them mixed.
But I am rather worried this year. You can guess
from my pictures what happened. **The first one**
shows you my office & stocking-room, and the first
out names while I copy them down. **We had**
awful sales here, worse than you did, tearing clouds
of snow to a million tatters, screaming like demons,
burying my horse almost up to the roof.

1929



Just at the worst the P.B. said it was stuffy & opened
a north window before I could stop him. ^{Look at}
the result - only ^{actually} the P.B. was barred in
papers & lists; but that did not stop him laughing
Also all my red & green ink was upset, as well as
black - so I am writing in chalk & pencil. I have
some black ink left (but I know you like colours)
& the P.B. is using it to address parcels.

I read all your letters - very much indeed my
dear Nobody, or very few, write so much or so
nicely to me. I am specially pleased with ^{Xtopher's}
card & his letters, & with his learning to write,
so I am sending him a FOUNTAIN PEN & also
a special picture for himself. It shows me crossing
the SEA on the upper NORTH wind, while a SOUTH
WEST gale - remainder gate it - is raising big
waves below.

This must be all now. I send you
all my love ^{One more} stockings to
fill this year! I hope you will like your
new house & the things I
bring you.

Your Old
Xmas

Top of the World,
North Pole
Xmas 1929

Dear Boys and Girl

It is a light Christmas again, I am glad to say—the Northern Lights have been specially good. There is a lot to tell you. You have heard that the Great Polar Bear chopped his paw when he was cutting Christmas Trees. His right one—I mean not his left; of course it was wrong to cut it, and a pity too for he spent a lot of the Summer learning to write better so as to help me with my winter letters.

We had a Bonfire this year (to please the Polar Bear) to celebrate the coming in of winter. The Snow-elves let off all the rockets together, which surprised us both. I have tried to draw you a picture of it, but really there were hundreds of rockets. You can't see the elves at all against the snow background.

The Bonfire made a hole in the ice and woke up the Great Seal, who happened to be underneath. The Polar Bear let off 20,000 silver sparklers afterwards—used up all my stock, so that is why I had none to send you. Then he went for a holiday!!!—to north Norway, and stayed with a wood-cutter called Olaf, and came back with paw all bandaged just at the beginning of our busy times.

There seem more children than ever in England, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Germany, which are the countries I specially look after (and of course North America and Canada)—not to speak of getting stuff down to the South Pole for children who expect to be looked after though they have gone to live in New Zealand or Australia or South Africa or China. It is a good thing clocks don't tell the same time all over the world or I should never get round, although when my magic is strongest—at Christmas—I can do about a thousand stockings a minute, if I have it all planned out beforehand. You could hardly guess the enormous piles of lists I make out. I seldom get them mixed.

But I am rather worried this year. In my office and packing-room, the Polar Bear reads out names while I copy them down. We had awful gales here, worse than you did, tearing clouds of snow to a million tatters, screaming like demons, burying my house almost up to the roofs. Just at the worst, the Polar Bear said it was stuffy! and opened a north window before I could stop him. You can guess the result—the North Polar Bear was buried in papers and lists; but that did not stop him laughing.

Also all my red and green ink was upset, as well as black,—so I am writing in chalk and pencil. I have some black ink left, and the Polar Bear is using it to address parcels.

I liked all your letters—very much indeed my dears. Nobody, or very few, write so much or so nicely to me. I'm specially pleased with Christopher's card, and his letters, and with his learning to write, so I am sending him a fountain pen and also a special picture for himself. It shows me crossing the sea on the upper North wind, while a South West gale—reindeer hate it—is raising big waves below.

This must be all now. I send you all my love. One more stocking to fill this year! I hope you will like your new house and the things I bring you.

Your Old Father Christmas



1930



J. M. C. Tolkien

By messenger

Nov 28th 1950.

Fr Christmas has got all your letters! What a lot, especially from C & M! Thank you, and also Reddy and your bears, & other animals.

I am just beginning to get awfully busy. Let me know more about what you specially want. also (if you can find out) what anyone else like P or Mummy or Aunty (I mean Miss) Grove wants. P & sends love. He is just getting better. He has had whooping cough !! P.N.C.

November 28th 1930

Father Christmas has got all your letters! What a lot, especially from Christopher and Michael! Thank you, and also Reddy and your bears, and other animals.

I am just beginning to get awfully busy. Let me know more about what you specially want.

Polar Bear sends love. He is just getting better. He has had Whooping Cough!!

Father Nicholas Christmas

Top of the World.


Christmas 1930

December 28th !!

Not finished until Christmas
Ev. 24th

My dears,

I have enjoyed all your letters. I am dreadfully sorry there has been no time to answer them. I wish now I had time to finish my packet for you properly or to send you a full long letter like I meant to. I hope you will like your stockings this year. I tried to find what you asked for but the stores I have bought in rather a muddle. I can see the Polar Bear had been ill. He had whooping-cough first of all. I could not let him help with the packing & writing which begins in November - because it would be simply awful if any of my children caught Polar Whooping-cough & looked like bears on Boxing-day. So I had to do everything myself in the preparations. I think I have done his best - he cleaned & mended my sledge and looked after the reindeer while I was busy. That is how the real bad accident happened. Early this month we had a most awful snowstorm, a bushy drift of snow followed by an awful fog. The poor P went out to the reindeer-stables, & got lost and nearly buried: I did not miss him or go to look for him for a long while. His chest had not got well from Mr. Cough so this made him frightfully ill, & he was in bed until three days ago. Everything has got wrong & there has been no one to look after my messengers properly.

Went you glad the P's letter? We had a party of Snow boys (sons of the Snowmen who are the only sort of people that live near - not of course men made of snow, though my gardener who is the dearest of all the snowmen sometimes draws a picture of a made snowman instead of writing his name) and Polar-Lads (the P's nephews) on Saturday as soon as we felt well enough. He didn't eat much tea, but when the big tractor went off after he was away his mug, and leaved in the air and has been all over since. 

The top picture shows P.B. telling a story after all the things had been cleared away. The little pictures I show me finding P.B. in the snow, P.B. sitting with his feet in hot mustard & water to stop him shivering. I didn't - he sneezed so terribly he blew his candles out. Still he's all right now - I know because he has been at his tricks again. I was talking with the Snowman in my garden & pushing him through the roof of his snow house & packing lumps of ice instead of presents in naughty children's parcels. That might be a good idea, only he never told me & some of them with the ice were put in warm storerooms & melted all our good million presents!

Well my dear's there is lots more I should like to say - about my great brother and my father and Grandfather Yule and why we were left called Nicholas after the Saint whose day is December 6th, who used to use secret presents, sometimes throwing purses of money through the window. But I must hurry away - I am late already & I am afraid you may not get this in time.

Kisses to you all



From Christmas.

P.S.

{ Yours has no need to be frightened of me }

Top of the World,
North Pole
Christmas 1930

Not finished until Christmas Eve, 24th December

My dears,

I have enjoyed all your letters. I am dreadfully sorry there has been no time to answer them, and even now I have not time to finish my picture for you properly or to send you a full long letter like I mean to.

I hope you will like your stockings this year: I tried to find what you asked for, but the stores have been in rather a muddle—you see the Polar Bear has been ill. He had whooping cough first of all. I could not let him help with the packing and sorting which begins in November—because it would be simply awful if any of my children caught Polar whooping cough and barked like bears on Boxing Day. So I had to do everything myself in the preparations.

Of course, Polar Bear has done his best—he cleaned up and mended my sleigh, and looked after the reindeer while I was busy. That is how the really bad accident happened. Early this month we had a most awful snowstorm (nearly six feet of snow) followed by an awful fog. The poor Polar Bear went out to the reindeer-stables, and got lost and nearly buried: I did not miss him or go to look for him for a long while. His chest had not got well from whooping cough so this made him frightfully ill, and he was in bed until three days ago. Everything has gone wrong, and there has been no one to look after my messengers properly.

Aren't you glad the Polar Bear is better? We had a party of Snowboys (sons of the Snowmen, which are the only sort of people that live near—not of course men made of snow, though my gardener who is the oldest of all the snowmen sometimes draws a picture of a made Snowman instead of writing his name) and Polar Cubs (the Polar Bear's nephews) on Saturday as soon as he felt well enough.

He didn't eat much tea, but when the big cracker went off after, he threw away his rug, and leaped in the air and has been well ever since.

I've drawn you pictures of everything that happened—Polar Bear telling a story after all the tea things had been cleared away; me finding Polar Bear in the snow, and Polar Bear sitting with his feet in hot mustard and water to stop him shivering. It didn't—and he sneezed so terribly he blew five candles out.

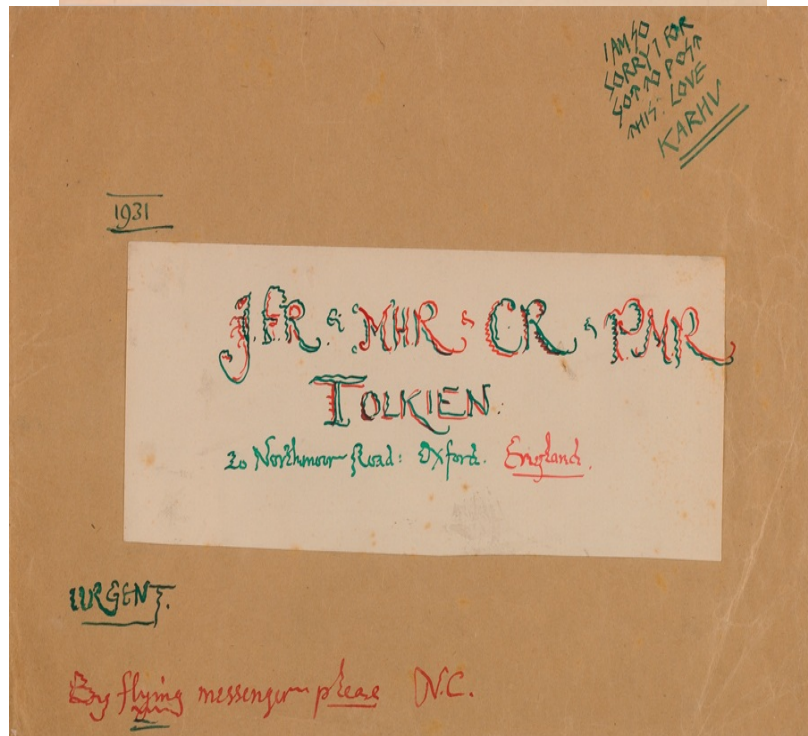
Still he is all right now—I know because he has been at his tricks again: quarrelling with the Snowman (my gardener) and pushing him through the roof of his snow house; and packing lumps of ice instead of presents in naughty children's parcels. That might be a good idea, only he never told me and some of them (with ice) were put in warm storerooms and melted all over good children's presents!

Well my dears there is lots more I should like to say—about my green brother and my father, old Grandfather Yule, and why we were both called Nicholas after the Saint (whose day is December sixth) who used to give secret presents, sometimes throwing purses of money through the window. But I must hurry away—I am late already and I am afraid you may not get this in time.

Kisses to you all,

Father Nicholas Christmas

P.S. (Chris has no need to be frightened of me).



1931

Cliff house

Oct. 31

1931

Dear Children,

Already I have got
some letters from you!
You are getting busy fairly
I have not begun to think about
Christmas yet. It has been very
warm in the North this year, &
there has been very little snow so
far. We are just getting in
our Xmas fire & wood.

This is just to say my messengers
will be coming round regularly now.

Winter has begun — we shall be
having a bonfire tomorrow — &
I shall like to hear from you:
Sunday & Wednesday evenings
are the best times to post to
me.

The P.B. is quite well & fairly
good — though you
never know what he will do
when the Xmas rush begins.

Send my love to John.

Yr loving
Mrs Xmas

GLAD FR X HAS WAKT UP. HESLEPT
NEARLY ALL THIS HOT SUMMER. I
WISH WE KOOD HAVE 4 NOW. MY
COAT IS DVIPE YELLO W. LOVE. PS.

Cliff House
October 31st 1931

Dear Children,

Already I have got some letters from you! You are getting busy early. I have not begun to think about Christmas yet. It has been very warm in the North this year, and there has been very little snow so far. We are just getting in our Christmas firewood.

This is just to say my messengers will be coming round regularly now Winter has begun—we shall be having a bonfire tomorrow—and I shall like to hear from you: Sunday and Wednesday evenings are the best times to post to me.

The Polar Bear is quite well and fairly good—(though you never know what he will do when the Christmas rush begins.) Send my love to John.

Your loving
Father Nicholas Christmas

Glad Father Christmas has wakt up. He slept nearly all this hot summer. I wish we kood have snow. My coat is quite yellow.

Love Polar Bear



Cliff House
Northville
December 23rd 1931

dear Children

I hope you will like the little things I have sent you. You seem to be most interested in Barbara. I just now to I am sending you mostly things of that sort. I send as much love as ever in fact more. We have both the old PB and I enjoyed having so many nice letters from you and your pets. I don't think we have not read them you are wrong. I am not sure that not many of the things you asked for have come. I am not perhaps quite so many as sometimes remember that this Christmas all over the world there are a terrible number of poor & starving people. I also my Green Brothers have had to do some collecting of food & clothes, and toys too for the children whose fathers & mothers and friends cannot give them anything. Sometimes not even dinner. I know you will forget you so my dears. I hope you will be happy this Christmas. I will have some good games with you. I will have all together. Don't forget did I tell you Christmas when you light your tree it has gone on being warm up here as I told you - somewhat very little snow. The NPB, if you know who I mean has been very sleepy as a result of very slow over packing many jobs he has enjoyed sampling and tastings the food parcels this year to see if they were fresh & good. I said that that is not the worst - I should hardly feel it was Christmas if he didn't do something ridiculous. You will never guess what he did this time. I sent him do you into me. Of my collar - the fracker hole we call it. I saw upon trees all with their kids off to show the birds & colours - well, I wanted 20 boxes & was busy sorting soldiers & farm things,

NOR ME-N. FB!

Sully

SOMEbody HAZ TO AND I FOUND SPONGES IN SOME OF THE KUKSANS

So I sent him, and he was so lazy he took two Snow-bags (who aren't allowed down there) to help him. They started pulling crackers out of boxes, and he tried to try them (the birds eat them) and they dodged and he fell over & let his candle fall right into my fire-work crackers & boxes of sparklers. I could hear the noise & smell the smell in the hall & when I rushed down I saw nothing but smoke and hissing steam & the PB was rolling over on the floor - sparks sticking in his coat - he has quite a bare patch burnt on his back. The Snow-bags roared with laughter & began to run away. They said it was a splendid sight, but they won't come to my party on St. Stephen's Day, they have had more than their share all ready. Some of the PB's nephews have been staying here for some time. Paku and Vakkonikka, fat and white hair they say it means. They are got-himmed polar-cubs, & are very funny looking one another & rolling about. But another time, I shall send them on Boxing-day & that just at packing-time. I fell over them quite times a day last week. A red Vakkonikka swallowed a ball of red string, thinking it was cake, and he got it all wound up inside and had a tangled cough - he couldn't sleep at night, but I thought it rather served him right for eating jelly in my bed. It was the same cub that purred all the while and yesterday into the fire - to make sure it did & they smelly smoke out. We lost Paku all last Wednesday & found him in the play morning asleep in a cupboard in the kitchen; he had eaten two whole puddings raw. They seem to be growing up just like their uncle.

THEY'RE WHITE AS GRAY ON MY BACK ANYMORE!

IT LOOKED FINE

NOT FAKE!

Good-bye now. I shall soon be off on my travels once more. You need not be. I love the pictures you send me in airplanes or Mustangs. I cannot drive one. I don't want to, and the love too slow anyway (I'd mention smell), they cannot compare with my own rickshaw. What I train myself. They are all very well this year. I expect my posts will be a very good time. I have got some new young ones this Christmas from Clapland (a great place for woodrats, but these are WILTZERS). One day I will send you a picture of my deer-stables and harness-houses. I am expecting that (I'm although he is now over 100, will hang up his stick by this late time, but I don't forget people even when they are past sticking - so not until they forget me. So I send LOVE to you. ALL I expect really little PM, which is beginning her stocking-day, I hope they will be happy.
Your Loving Father Christmas
if you want to come

END!

Cliff House,
North Pole
December 23rd 1931

My dear Children

I hope you will like the little things I have sent you. You seem to be most interested in Railways just now, so I am sending you mostly things of that sort. I send as much love as ever, in fact more. We have both, the old Polar Bear and I, enjoyed having so many nice letters from you and your pets. If you think we have not read them you are wrong; but if you find that not many of the things you asked for have come, and not perhaps quite as many as sometimes, remember that this Christmas all over the world there are a terrible number of poor and starving people.

I (and also my Green Brother) have had to do some collecting of food and clothes, and toys too, for the children whose fathers and mothers and friends cannot give them anything, sometimes not even dinner. I know yours won't forget you.

So, my dears, I hope you will be happy this Christmas and not quarrel, and will have some good games with your Railway all together. Don't forget old Father Christmas, when you light your tree.

Nor me!

It has gone on being warm up here as I told you—not what you would call warm, but warm for the North Pole, with very little snow. The North Polar Bear, if you know who I mean, has been lazy and sleepy as a result, and very slow over packing, or any job except eating. He has enjoyed sampling and tasting the food parcels this year (to see if they were fresh and good, he said).

Somebody haz to—and I found stones in some of the kurrants.

But that is not the worst—I should hardly feel it was Christmas if he didn't do something ridiculous. You will never guess what he did this time! I sent him down into one of my cellars—the Cracker-hole we call it—where I keep thousands of boxes of crackers (you would like to see them, rows upon rows, all with their lids off to show the kinds of colours).

Well, I wanted 20 boxes, and was busy sorting soldiers and farm things, so I sent him; and he was so lazy he took two Snowboys (who aren't allowed down there) to help him. They started pulling crackers out of boxes, and he tried to box them (the boys' ears I mean), and they dodged and he fell over, and let his candle fall right POOF! into my firework crackers and boxes of sparklers.

I could hear the noise, and smell the smell in the hall; and when I rushed down I saw nothing but smoke and fizzing stars, and old Polar Bear was rolling over on the floor with sparks sizzling in his coat: he has quite a bare patch burnt on his back.

It looked fine!

That's where Father Christmas spilled the gravy on my back at dinner!

The Snowboys roared with laughter and then ran away. They said it was a splendid sight—but they won't come to my party on St Stephen's Day; they have had more than their share already.

Two of the Polar Bear's nephews have been staying here for some time—Paksu and Valkotukka ('fat' and 'white-hair' they say it means). They are fat-tummied polar-cubs, and are very funny boxing one another and rolling about. But another time, I shall have them on Boxing Day, and not just at packing-time. I fell over them fourteen times a day last week.

And Valkotukka swallowed a ball of red string, thinking it was cake, and he got it all wound up inside and had a tangled cough—he couldn't sleep at night, but I thought it rather served him right for putting holly in my bed.

It was the same cub that poured all the black ink yesterday into the fire—to make night: it did and a very smelly smoky one. We lost Paksu all last Wednesday and found him on Thursday morning asleep in a cupboard in the kitchen; he had eaten two whole puddings raw. They seem to be growing up just like their uncle.

Not fair!

Goodbye now. I shall soon be off on my travels once more. You need not believe any pictures you see of me in aeroplanes or motors. I cannot drive one, and don't want to; and they are too slow anyway (not to mention smell). They cannot compare with my own reindeer, which I train myself. They are all very well this year, and I expect my posts will be in very good time. I have got some new young ones this Christmas from Lapland (a great place for wizards; but these are WHIZZERS).

Bad!

One day I will send you a picture of my deer-stables and harness-houses. I am expecting that John, although he is now over 14, will hang up his stocking this last time; but I don't forget people even when they are past stocking-age, not until they forget me. So I send LOVE to you ALL, and especially little PM, who is beginning her stocking-days and I hope they will be happy.

Your loving Father Christmas

P.S. This is all drawn by North Polar Bear. Don't you think he is getting better? But the green ink is mine—and he didn't ask for it.

1931

-32

NPB

KARHU



LOVE FROM KARHU, PAKSV, AND VALKOTVKKA .

V

*This is all drawn by NPB. Don't you
 think he's getting better. But the green
 ink is mine — & he didn't ask for it.*



Rough sketch of cracker accident. Had no time to do proper picture.

* ENGLAND
VR 6/11

By phone-carrier
* Immediate
haste!

X
PAID 2
19 32
P



To
John Michael & Christopher
& Priscilla Tolkien
20 Northmoor Road
Oxford
ENGLAND

30

1932

Cliff House
North Pole.

November 20th

1932.



My dear children,

Thank you for your nice letters. I have not forgotten you. I am very late this year & very worried—a very funny thing has happened. The P.B. has disappeared & I don't know where he is. I have not seen him since the beginning of this month & I am getting anxious. Tomorrow December the Christmas month, begins & I don't know what I shall do without him.

I am glad you are all well & your many pets. The snowbirds holidays begin tomorrow. I wish P.B. was here to look after them. Love to M.E. & P. Please send my love when you write to him.

Yours
Father Christmas

Cliff House,
North Pole.
November 30th 1932

My dear children

Thank you for your nice letters. I have not forgotten you. I am very late this year and very worried—a very funny thing has happened. The Polar Bear has disappeared, and I don't know where he is. I have not seen him since the beginning of this month, and I am getting anxious. Tomorrow December, the Christmas month, begins, and I don't know what I shall do without him.

I am glad you are all well and your many pets. The Snowbabies holidays begin tomorrow. I wish Polar Bear was here to look after them. Love to Michael, Christopher and Priscilla. Please send John my love when you write to him.

Father N. Christmas.

At the bottom of the page you will see a whole row of goblin pictures — they must be very old, because the goblins & hobgoblins are getting on drawn: a very nice set of dwarf & dachshund like creature, they used to use but they have died out long ago. I believe the Red Gnomes finished them off somewhere about Edward the Fourth's time. You will see some more on the page in my picture of the Gnomes. I don't like the hairy rhinoceros look wicked; there is also a nasty look in the mammoth's eyes. You will also see an ox, a dog, a bear, a cow-bear, portrait of O. B. C.'s swamy first ancestor, he says, and some other kind of poland but not quite polar bear. N.P.B. would like to believe it is a portrait of some of his ancestors! Just under the bears you can see what is the best a goblin can do at drawing remember!

I have been to good morning some (I had beautiful letters too) that I have sent to O. B. C. your 2 sons especially nice pictures of it — not as if the top of my Christmas card is a quiet, imaginary, burrow or less as if really is of me arriving at Oxford. These houses is just about where the time with black points I stick up out of to the shadows. Or the right of me coming from the north you see — I note NOT with 12 pairs of feet as you will see in some books. I usually use 17 pair (14 is such a nice number) & at Christmas especially if I am hurried, I add my 2 special white ones in front.

Not comes a picture of me and O. B. C. & N.P.B. exploring the Caves — I will tell you more about that in a minute. The last picture is also imaginary, that is it hasn't happened yet. I swim well. On St. Stephen's Day, when all the fish is out, I am going to have a round party; the G.C.'s grandchildren (they are exactly like the teddy bears), and babies, some children of the Red Gnomes, & of course their cubs, including Poku & Vokkavikka, will be there. Don't you like my new green trousers? They were a present from my green brother, but I only wear them at home. I pulled my way down to open, so I found them useful. Please, when I received P.B., who hadn't finished the adventure. At the beginning of this week we went into the cellars to get up the stuff for Christmas. I said to P.B. 'Somebody has been doing some thing here!' P.B. & I expect, he said. 'But it wasn't.'

Not day things were much worse, especially among the railway things, lots of which seemed to be missing. I ought to have pursued P. O. B. anyway ought to have mentioned his quest to me. I last Saturday we went down I found nearly every thing had disappeared out of the main cellar! Imagine my state of mind! Nothing nearly so bad to anybody, but little time to get a milk enough new stuff. N.P.B. said 'I smell goblin stuff'. Of course, it was obvious — they lay mechanical boys (though they quickly smash them & want more & more & more) & practically all the factory things had gone. Eventually we found a large hole (barnet big enough for us) leading to a tunnel behind

Some packing cases in the Shop Cellar. If you will expect we ended off to find O. B. C. we went back to the caves. We soon looked out the queerities. I've seen plain the goblins long ago had burrowed a tunnel from the caves to my old home (but was not so far from the end of the hills), he had stolen a load many things. We found some things more than a hundred years old, with a few separate still addressed to your Great-grand-people! But they had been very cleverly not to be traced by G.C.'s not found out. Evidence of mind they must have been busy burrowing all the way to my Cliff, being busy by blowing (as quietly as they could). At last they had reached my new cellars. The goblins, the things they were too much for them & they took all they could. I dare say they were also still angry with the P.B. Also they thought we couldn't get at them. But I got my patrol green luminous smoke down the tunnel, & P.B. blew it down it with our Christmas kitchen bellows. They simply shrieked by, rushed out the other Caves end. But there were Red Gnomes there. This specially sent for them — a few of the real old families are still in Newsway. They captured hundreds of goblins, & chased many more out into the open (which they hate). We made them show us where they had hidden things, or bring them all back again. By Monday we had got practically everything back. The Gnomes are still dealing with the goblins, & I promise there won't be one left by New Year — but I am not so sure they will creep up again in a century or so of goblins.

I have had a note, but dear old O. B. C. has sent by the Gnomes ladies help, which we are now very well provided & all packed. I hope there is not the faintest smell of goblin about any of your things. They have all been well aired. There are still a few missing things missing but I hope you will have what you want. I am not sure I can quite do much top-cave as usual this year, as I am doing a good deal of food and drink (and stuff) there are far too many people in your land, & others who are hungry. I said this winter. I am glad that with you the weather is warmish. I'd not want here. I have had tremendous ice winds & terrible snow storms, & my old house is quite buried. I'd from feeling very well, better than ever, & I thought my hand would be a good party because I don't like writing as much as I thought which I should find. I don't think it is so stable this year.

The P.B. got your father's scribble today. It was very puzzled by it. He thought the written side was meant for him. I told him it looked like all lecture notes, & he laughed. He says he thinks it is quite a mad place (people write such stuff, but I don't suppose my body listens to it). The other side pleased him better. He said: 'At any rate those tops' father tried to draw bears — though they aren't good. Of course it is all nonsense, but I shall answer it.'

I am making up an alphabet from the marks in the caves. It says it is much nicer than the ordinary letters, or than Roman, or Poku letters, and says he's going better. He writes them with the tail of his penholder! He has sent a short letter to you on this alphabet — I wish you a

A very merry Christmas and I am in the New Year and
 good luck at School. As you are all so clever now (he says)
 what with Latin & French & Greek you will easily read it and
 see that I send much love.

I am not so sure. But I say that nearly all of it is
 actually in my letter between the two red stars. (Anyhow I dare
 say he would send you a copy of his alphabet if you wrote & asked.)
 The way he writes it in columns from top to bottom not across:
 I dare tell him I gave away his secret.

This is one of my very longest letters. It has been
 an exciting time. I hope it will like better about it.
 And you all my love: John, Michael, Christopher, & Francis:
 Also Thomas our Daddy and Annie with the people in your
 house. I wish John will get he has got to give up look (up)
 now & go away to the many new children that have arrived since
 he first began to hang his top; but for the will not forget him.
 I love you all. Your loving
 Nicholas Christmas.

Christmas 1892

Cliff House,
near the North Pole
December 23rd 1932

My dear children,

There is a lot to tell you. First of all a Merry Christmas! But there have been lots of adventures you will want to hear about. It all began with the funny noises underground which started in the summer and got worse and worse. I was afraid an earthquake might happen. The North Polar Bear says he suspected what was wrong from the beginning. I only wish he had said something to me; and anyway it can't be quite true, as he was fast asleep when it began, and did not wake up till about Michael's birthday.

However, he went off for a walk one day, at the end of November I think, and never came back! About a fortnight ago I began to be really worried, for after all the dear old thing is really a lot of help, in spite of accidents, and very amusing.

One Friday evening (December 9th) there was a bumping at the front door, and a snuffling. I thought he had come back, and lost his key (as often before); but when I opened the door there was another very old bear there, a very fat and funny-shaped one. Actually it was the eldest of the few remaining cave-bears, old Mr Cave Bear himself (I had not seen him for centuries).

"Do you want your North Polar Bear?" he said. "If you do you had better come and get him!" It turned out he was lost in the caves (belonging to Mr Cave Bear, or so he says) not far from the ruins of my old house. He says he found a hole in the side of a hill and went inside because it was snowing. He slipped down a long slope, and lots of rock fell after him, and he found he could not climb up or get out again.

But almost at once he smelt goblin! and became interested, and started to explore. Not very wise; for of course goblins can't hurt him, but their caves are very dangerous.

Naturally he soon got quite lost, and the goblins shut off all their lights, and made queer noises and false echoes.

Goblins are to us very much what rats are to you, only worse because they are very clever; and only better because there are, in these parts, very few. We thought there were none left. Long ago we had great trouble with them—that was about 1453 I believe—but we got the help of the Gnomes, who are their greatest enemies, and cleared them out.

Anyway, there was poor old Polar Bear lost in the dark all among them, and all alone until he met Mr Cave Bear (who lives there). Cave Bear can see pretty well in the dark, and he offered to take Polar Bear to his private back-door.

So they set off together, but the goblins were very excited and angry (Polar Bear had boxed one or two flat that came and poked him in the dark, and had said some very nasty things to them all); and they enticed him away by imitating Cave Bear's voice, which of course they know very well. So Polar Bear got into a frightful dark part, all full of different passages, and he lost Cave Bear, and Cave Bear lost him.

"Light is what we need." said Cave Bear to me. So I got some of my special sparkling torches - which I sometimes use in my deepest cellars—and we set off that night.

specially nice pictures this year. At the top of my 'Christmas card' is a picture, imaginary, but more or less as it really is, of me arriving over Oxford. Your house is just about where the three little black points stick up out of the shadows at the right. I am coming from the north, and note, NOT with 12 pair of deer, as you will see in some books. I usually use 7 pair (14 is such a nice number), and at Christmas, especially if I am hurried, I add my 2 special white ones in front.

Next comes a picture of me and Cave Bear and North Polar Bear exploring the Caves—I will tell you more about that in a minute. The last picture hasn't happened yet. It soon will. On St Stephen's Day, when all the rush is over, I am going to have a rowdy party: the Cave Bear's grandchildren (they are exactly like live teddy-bears), Snowbabies, some children of the Red Gnomes, and of course Polar Cubs, including Paksu and Valkotukka, will be there.

I'm wearing a pair of new green trousers. They were a present from my green brother, but I only wear them at home. Goblins anyway dislike green, so I found them useful.

You see, when I rescued Polar Bear, we hadn't finished the adventures. At the beginning of last week we went into the cellars to get up the stuff for England. I said to Polar Bear, "Somebody has been disarranging things here!"

"Paksu and Valkotukka, I expect," he said. But it wasn't. Next day things were much worse, especially among the railway things, lots of which seemed to be missing. I ought to have guessed, and Polar Bear anyway, ought to have mentioned his guess to me.

Last Saturday we went down and found nearly everything had disappeared out of the main cellar! Imagine my state of mind! Nothing hardly to send to anybody, and too little time to get or make enough new stuff.

North Polar Bear said, "I smell goblin strong." Of course, it was obvious:—they love mechanical toys (though they quickly smash them, and want more and more and more); and practically all the Hornby things had gone! Eventually we found a large hole (but not big enough for us), leading to a tunnel, behind some packing-cases in the West Cellar.

As you will expect we rushed off to find Cave Bear, and we went back to the caves. We soon understood the queer noises. It was plain the goblins long ago had burrowed a tunnel from the caves to my old home (which was not so far from the end of their hills), and had stolen a good many things.

We found some things more than a hundred years old, even a few parcels still addressed to your great-grand-people! But they had been very clever, and not too greedy, and I had not found out.

Ever since I moved they must have been busy burrowing all the way to my Cliff, boring, banging and blasting (as quietly as they could). At last they had reached my new cellars, and the sight of the Hornby things was too much for them: they took all they could.

I daresay they were also still angry with the Polar Bear. Also they thought we couldn't get at them. But I sent my patent green luminous smoke down the tunnel, and Polar Bear blew and blew it with our enormous kitchen bellows. They simply shrieked and rushed out the other (cave) end.

But there were Red Gnomes there. I had specially sent for them—a few of the real old families are still in Norway. They captured hundreds of goblins, and chased many more out into the snow (which they hate).

We made them show us where they had hidden things, or bring them all back again, and by Monday we had got practically everything back. The Gnomes are still dealing with the goblins, and promise there won't be one left by New Year—but I am not so sure: they will crop up again in a century or so, I expect.

We have had a rush; but dear old Cave Bear and his sons and the Gnome-ladies helped; so that we are now very well forward and all packed. I hope there is not the faintest smell of goblin about any of your things. They have all been well aired. There are still a few railway things missing, but I hope you will have what you want. I am not able to carry quite as much toy- cargo as usual this year, as I am taking a good deal of food and clothes (useful stuff): there are far too many people in your land, and others, who are hungry and cold this winter.

I am glad that with you the weather is warmish. It is not warm here. We have had tremendous icy winds and terrific snow-storms, and my old house is quite buried. But I am feeling very well, better than ever, and though my hand wobbles with a pen, partly because I don't like writing as much as drawing (which I learned first), I don't think it is so wobbly this year.

The Polar Bear got your father's scribble to-day, and was very puzzled by it. I told him it looked like old lecture-notes, and he laughed. He says he thinks Oxford is quite a mad place if people lecture such stuff: "but I don't suppose anybody listens to it." The drawings pleased him better. He said: "At any rate those boys' father tried to draw bears—though they aren't good. Of course it is all nonsense, but I will answer it." So he made up an alphabet from the marks in the caves. He says it is much nicer than the ordinary letters, or than Runes, or Polar letters, and suits his paw better. He writes them with the tail of his penholder! He has sent a short letter to you in this alphabet—to wish you a very Merry Christmas and lots of fun in the New Year and good luck at School. As you are all so clever now (he says) what with Latin and French and Greek you will easily read it and see that Polar Bear sends much love.

I am not so sure. (Anyway I dare say he would send you a copy of his alphabet if you wrote and asked. By the way he writes it in columns from top to bottom, not across: don't tell him I gave away his secret).

This is one of my very longest letters. It has been an exciting time. I hope you will like hearing about it. I send you all my love: John, Michael, Christopher, and Priscilla: also Mummy and Daddy and Auntie and all the people in your house. I dare say John will feel he has got to give up stockings now and give way to the many new children that have arrived since he first began to hang his up; but Father Christmas will not forget him. Bless you all.

Your loving, Nicholas Christmas.

1932



A MERRY CHRISTMAS

NC



Handwritten text in a highly stylized, decorative script, possibly a form of shorthand or a specific dialect. The text is arranged in approximately 15 vertical columns, with each column containing about 15-20 characters. The characters are intricate, often resembling calligraphic flourishes or stylized letters. A single character is centered below the main block of text.



1933

from
F. Xmas
≡

nr.

North Pole.

Dec. 2nd. 1933.

Dear People. Very cold here at last. Business has really begun, & we are working hard. I have had a good many letters from you. Thank you. I have made notes of what you want so far, but I expect I shall hear more from you yet. I am rather short of messengers — the goblins & hounds — but I haven't time to tell you about our

excitements now. I hope I shall find time to send a letter to labor. Give John my love when you see him. I send love to all of you, & a kiss for Driscilla — tell her my beard is quite nice & soft, as I have never shaved three weeks to Christmas Eve!

Yrs Father X. Christmas

CHEER UP CHAPS THE
FUN'S BEGINNING YRS

+ also chaplet (if that's the feminine) F.B.

Near North Pole
December 2nd 1933

Dear People,

Very cold here at last. Business has really begun, and we are working hard. I have had a good many letters from you. Thank you. I have made notes of what you want so far, but I expect I shall hear more from you yet—I am rather short of messengers—the goblins have—but I haven't time to tell you about our excitements now. I hope I shall find time to send a letter later.

Give John my love when you see him. I send love to all of you, and a kiss for Priscilla—tell her my beard is quite nice and soft, as I have never shaved.

Three weeks to Christmas Eve!

Yours, Father Nicholas Christmas

Cheer up, chaps (Also chaplet, if that's the feminine). The fun's beginning!

Yours, Polar Bear

Clig House
near the North Pole.

* December 21st *

1933

My dears

Another Christmas! and I almost thought at one time (in November) that there would not be one this year. There would be the 25th of Dec. of course, but nothing from your old great-great-great-etc. grand father at the North Pole. My pictures tell you part of the story. **Goblins** The worst attack we have had for centuries. They have been fearfully wild and angry ever since we took all their stolen toys off them last year & doted them with green smoke. You remember the Red Gnomes promised to clear all of them out. There was not one to be found in any hole or cave by New Year's day. But I said they would creep up again - in a century or so. They had not waited so long if they must have gathered their nasty friends from mountains all over the world & been busy all the summer while we were at our sleepiest. This time we had very little warning. Soon after All Saints Day they got very restless. He now says he smelt nasty smells - but as usual he did not say anything; he says he did not want to trouble me. He really is a nice old thing. This time he absolutely saved Christmas. He took to sleeping in the kitchen with his nose towards the cellar door, opening on the main stairway down into my big stores.

One night just about Christopher's birthday I woke up suddenly. He was squeaking and spluttering in the room of a nasty smell - in my den but green & purple rooms that I had

just had done up most beautifully. I caught sight of a wicked little face at the window. Then I smelt a nasty smell up for my window showing above the eaves & that meant there had been goblins about - which we haven't seen since the goblin-war in 1453, that I told you about. It was only just quiet again when a terrific din began for dawn's sake in the store cellars. It would take too long to describe, so I have tried to draw a picture of what I saw when I got down - after treading on a robin on the mat. **ONLY THERE WAS MORE LIKE 1000 GOBLINS THAN 15 FF** (But you could hardly expect me to draw 1000). It was swarming & squawking & tromping & boozing & kicking goblins through the rafters like a 200 of the bollocks with chelling like Emma whistle. He was splended. **NO MORE FIENDS YET IT IS MENSELY!** Well it is a long story. The trouble lasted for over a fortnight & it began to look as if I should never be able to get my sleep out this year. The goblins had set part of the stores on fire & had captured several gnomes, who deep down there on guard before I had some more gnomes come in - and killed 100 before I came. I don't know what they were doing in my room, unless they were trying to set fire to my bed. The trouble went on. The ground was black with goblins under the main when we looked out & and they had broken up my stables and come off with the remainder. I had to blow my golden trumpet (which I have not done for many years) to summon all my friends. There were several battles - every night they used to attack and set fire in the stores - before we got the upper hand & I am afraid quite a lot of my dear ones got hurt. Fortunately we have not lost much except my best things (gold and silver) and pack in papers and holy-loves. I am very short of these; and I have been very short of messengers. Lots of my people are still away & I hope they will come back safe chasing the goblins out of my land, those that are left alive. They have rescued all my remainder. We are quite happy & settled again now & feel much safer. It really will be centuries before we get another goblin-trouble. Thanks to

P is the gnomes, there can't be very many left at all.
**AND FR. I WISH I COULD DRAW OR
HAD TIME TO TRY - YOU HAVE NO IDEA
WHAT THE OLD MAN CAN DO! LISTENING
AND FIREWORKS AND THUNDER OF GUNS!**

P certainly has been busy helping double help - but he has
mixed up some of the old things with the boys' in his humor. We
hope we have not all sorted out - but if you hear of any one getting
a doll when they wanted an engine, you will know why.
P really tells me from Sweden we did lose a lot of
railroad stuff - robins always go for that - and what we had
bad was damaged and I will have to be repaired. It
will be a busy summer next year.

How a merry Christmas to you all once again.
I hope you will all have a very happy time. I
will not that I have taken notice of your letters, & sent you
what you wanted. I don't think my picture's any very
good this year - though I took quite a time over them
(at least two minutes). **P** says I don't see that a lot of stars
pictures of robins in your old man are so faithfully merry.
Still I hope you don't mind it is rather good of **P** taking
trouble. Anyway I send lots of love.

P says ever and annually
Father Christmas.



Cliff House, near the North Pole

December 21st 1933

My dears

Another Christmas! and I almost thought at one time (in November) that there would not be one this year. There would be the 25th of December, of course, but nothing from your old great-great-etc. grandfather at the North Pole.

Goblins. The worst attack we have had for centuries. They have been fearfully wild and angry ever since we took all their stolen toys off them last year and dosed them with green smoke. You remember the Red Gnomes promised to clear all of them out. There was not one to be found in any hole or cave by New Year's day. But I said they would crop up again—in a century or so.

They have not waited so long! They must have gathered their nasty friends from mountains all over the world, and been busy all the summer while we were at our sleepest. This time we had very little warning.

Soon after All Saints' Day, Polar Bear got very restless. He now says he smelt nasty smells—but as usual he did not say anything: he says he did not want to trouble me. He really is a nice old thing, and this time he absolutely saved Christmas. He took to sleeping in the kitchen with his nose towards the cellar-door, opening on the main-stairway down into my big stores.

One night, just about Christopher's birthday, I woke up suddenly. There was squeaking and spluttering in the room and a nasty smell—in my own best green and purple room that I had just had done up most beautifully. I caught sight of a wicked little face at the window. Then I really was upset, for my window is high up above the cliff, and that meant there were bat-riding goblins about—which we haven't seen since the goblin-war in 1453, that I told you about.

I was only just quite awake, when a terrific din began far downstairs—in the store-cellars. It would take too long to describe, so I have tried to draw a picture of what I saw when I got down—after treading on a goblin on the mat.

Only ther was more like 1000 goblins than 15.

(But you could hardly expect me to draw 1000). Polar Bear was squeezing, squashing, trampling, boxing and kicking goblins skyhigh, and roaring like a zoo, and the goblins were yelling like engine whistles. He was splendid.

Say no more—I enjoyed it immensely!

Well, it is a long story. The trouble lasted for over a fortnight, and it began to look as if I should never be able to get my sleigh out this year. The goblins had set part of the stores on fire and captured several gnomes, who sleep down there on guard, before Polar Bear and some more gnomes came in—and killed 100 before I arrived.

Even when we had put the fire out and cleared the cellars and house (I can't think what they were doing in my room, unless they were trying to set fire to my bed) the trouble went on. The ground was black with goblins under the moon when we looked out, and they had broken up my stables and gone off with the

reindeer.

I had to blow my golden trumpet (which I have not done for many years) to summon all my friends. There were several battles—every night they used to attack and set fire in the stores—before we got the upper hand, and I am afraid quite a lot of my dear elves got hurt.

Fortunately we have not lost much except my best string, (gold and silver) and packing papers and holly-boxes. I am very short of these: and I have been very short of messengers. Lots of my people are still away (I hope they will come back safe) chasing the goblins out of my land, those that are left alive.

They have rescued all my reindeer. We are quite happy and settled again now, and feel much safer. It really will be centuries before we get another goblin-trouble. Thanks to Polar Bear and the gnomes, there can't be very many left at all.

And Father Christmas. I wish I could draw or had time to try—you have no idea what the old man can doo! Litening and fierworks and thunder of guns!

Polar Bear certainly has been busy helping, and double help—but he has mixed up some of the girls' things with the boys' in his hurry. We hope we have got all sorted out—but if you hear of anyone getting a doll when they wanted an engine, you will know why. Actually Polar Bear tells me I am wrong—we did lose a lot of railway stuff—goblins always go for that—and what we got back was damaged and will have to be repainted. It will be a busy summer next year.

Now, a merry Christmas to you all once again. I hope you will all have a very happy time; and will find that I have taken notice of your letters and sent you what you wanted. I don't think my pictures are very good this year—though I took quite a time over them (at least two minutes). Polar Bear says, “I don't see that a lot of stars and pictures of goblins in your bedroom are so frightfully merry.” Still I hope you won't mind. It is rather good of Polar Bear kicking, really. Anyway I send lots of love.

Yours ever and annually

Father Nicholas Christmas.

x P  F.C.  B r



 Christmas 1933 

1934



At once

Urgent

Express!

My dear E.
Thank you! I am awake - & have been a long while. ∴ But my post office does not really open ever until Mich. & Xmas. I shall not be sending my messengers out regularly this year until about October 15th. There is a good deal to do up here. Your telegram - that is the one I have sent - an express reply - & letter - (Anilla's does she really spell it that way?) were found quite by accident; not by a messenger but by Bellman (I don't know how he got that name because he never rings any; he is my chimney inspector

I always begins work as soon as the first fires are lit. Very much love to you and B. (The p.B. if you remember him, is still fast asleep, & quite thin after so much fasting. He will soon cure that. I shall tickle his ribs & wake him up soon; & then he will eat several months' breakfast all in one.) More love.

Yours for E.

1834

!! To messenger: Deliver at once & don't stop on the way !!

!! To messenger: Deliver at once and don't stop on the way!!

At once Urgent Express!

My dear Christopher

Thank you! I am awake—and have been a long while. But my post office does not really open ever until Michaelmas. I shall not be sending my messengers out regularly this year until about October 15th. There is a good deal to do up here. Your telegram—that is why I have sent an express reply—and letter and Priscilla's were found quite by accident: not by a messenger but by Bellman (I don't know how he got that name because he never rings any; he is my chimney inspector and always begins work as soon as the first fires are lit).

Very much love to you and Priscilla. (The Polar Bear, if you remember him, is still fast asleep, and quite thin after so much fasting. He will soon cure that. I shall tickle his ribs and wake him up soon; and then he will eat several months' breakfast all in one).

More love, your loving Father Christmas

Cliff House.
NORTH FOLEY.
CHRISTMAS 1934
Christmas Eve.

My dear Christopher
I have had time this year to write you
so long a letter as last year's. I hope these
pictures please you with the things I am
writing about. I have not even had time to
write you about the things I have written
about. I have not even had time to write
you about the things I have written about.

My little news: after the frightful business of last year there
hasn't been even a small of robin for 200 miles round. But as I said I
would stick us for into the summer to repair all the damage. We had a
lot of sleep and rest. When November came round we did not feel
like getting to work. We were rather slow and so have been nicker at the end.
Also it has been unusually warm for the North foley and the snow will keep
on melting.

Polka Winkles have been here a long while. They have even
gone to the school and still get up to frolicful mischief between times of being
to help. This year they will my points and painted scrolls on the white walls
of the cellar; eat all the mistletoe out of the pine material for Christmas;
and yesterday night and unpeaked half the parcels to find out what they
play with. They don't get on well with the Covey's and
several of these have arrived today and are staying here a few nights with
old Cave Brown Love, who has been unwell. I spend much time with
great grand uncle etc. Please is always kicking them because they
squeak and grunt so furiously; PB has to box them often - and

a box from PB's wife. As there are no Goblins about, and a thick
snow and so far much less snow than usual, we are going to have
a great bonfire party another week or two. I shall take 100
candles of red, green, blue, yellow, and white and snowglobes of
course. PB and PB and PB and his nephews (etc) will be there.
We have bought a box all the way from Norway and planted it in a pool
of ice. My picture gives you no idea of size or of the loveliness of it
more lights of different colours. We tried them yesterday evening
and they were all right. The picture. If you see a bright
glow in the North you will know what it is. The tree is
things behind, not many plants, and piled masses of snow made into
oriental shapes - they are purple and black because of darkness
and shadow. The coloured things in front is a special design in the
ice pool - and it is made of real coloured & ice. PB has
already nibbled at it, though they should not eat the party.
PB stayed to draw this to help me as I was busy with the
inward such blot - enormous ones - hold tight to the light and
you will see where I had to come to the rescue. It is very
good this year. Never mind: perhaps better next year.
I hope you will like your presents & be very
happy.
Your loving
C. F. Christmas.

PS I really can't remember exactly in what year I was born. I doubt if
anyone knows. I am always changing my own mind about it.
My soap was 1034 years ago or just nearly that. Bless you!

P.B. LOVE
BIZY THANKS
PS Overcome to Jack & John.

Cliff House,
North Pole
Christmas Eve. 1934

My dear Christopher

Thank you very much for your many letters. I have not had time this year to write you so long a letter as 1932 and 1933, but nothing at all exciting has happened.

I hope I have pleased you with the things I am bringing and that they are near enough to your lists.

Very little news: after the frightful business of last year there has not been even a smell of goblin for 200 miles round. But, as I said it would, it took us far into the summer to repair all the damage, and we lost a lot of sleep and rest.

When November came round we did not feel like getting to work, and we were rather slow and so have been rushed at the end. Also it has been unusually warm for the North Pole, and the Polar Bear still keeps on yawning.

Paksu and Valkotukka have been here a long while. They have grown a good deal—but still get up to frightful mischief in between times of trying to help. This year they stole my paints and painted scrawls on the white walls of the cellars; ate all the mincemeat out of the pies made ready for Christmas; and only yesterday went and unpacked half the parcels to find railway things to play with!

They don't get on well with the Cave cubs, somehow; several of these have arrived today and are staying here a few nights with old Cave Brown Cave, who is their uncle, granduncle, grandfather, great granduncle, etc. Paksu is always kicking them because they squeak and grunt so funnily: Polar Bear has to box him often—and a 'box' from Polar Bear is no joke.

As there are no Goblins about, and as there is no wind, and so far much less snow than usual, we are going to have a great boxing-day party ourselves—out of doors. I shall ask 100 elves and red gnomes, lots of polar cubs, cave-cubs, and snowbabies, and of course, Paksu and Valkotukka, and Polar Bear and Cave Bear and his nephews (etc.) will be there.

We have brought a tree all the way from Norway and planted it in a pool of ice. My picture gives you no idea of its size, or of the loveliness of its magic lights of different colours. We tried them yesterday evening to see if they were all right. If you see a bright glow in the North you will know what it is!

Behind the tree are snowplants, and piled masses of snow made into ornamental shapes—they are purple and black because of darkness and shadow. There is also a special edging to the ice-pool—and it is made of real coloured icing. Paksu and Valkotukka are already nibbling at it, though they should not—till the party.

Polar Bear started to draw this to help me, as I was busy, but he dropped such blots—enormous ones. I had to come to the rescue. Not very good this year. Never mind: perhaps better next year.

I hope you will like your presents and be very happy.

Your loving

Father Christmas.

PS I really can't remember exactly in what year I was born. I doubt if anyone knows. I am always changing my own mind about it. Anyway it was 1934 years ago or jolly nearly that. Bless you! FC PPS
Give my love to Mick and John.

Polar Bear LOVE BISI THANKS



N 36 P



Master C & Miss P. Tolkien
20 Northmoor Road
Oxford
ENGLAND

FC

December 24 1935 *

North Pole

My Dear Children:

Here we are again. Christmas seems to come round pretty soon again; always much the same and always different. No SNK this year and no water so no painted pictures; also very cold hands, so very wobbly writing. Last year it was very warm but this year it is frightfully cold - and so snow, snow and ice. We have been **simply** buried, maddener's nose got lost and found themselves in **Never** **Scoria**, if you know where that is, instead of in Scotland; and **PIP** if you know what that is, could not get home. This is a picture of



my house about a week ago before we got the rendezvous shed built. You can see the tunnel which leads to the front door. There are only three windows upstairs.

Shining chimney hills - but you can see steam where the cones are melting off the dome and roof. This view from my bedroom window. Of course snow



comes down not blue - but blue is cold. You can understand why our letters were slow. I am going to have to get them all, and anyway that the best thing I can do for you. **PIP** from who I mean, had to go away soon after the snow began last month. There was some trouble in his family, and taken by **Waltshukka** was ill. He is

very good at becoming anybody but himself. But it is a dreadful thing to have over the ice and snow to **Neil** **Chevaland**, I believe. And when he got there he could not get back. So I have been rather held up, especially at the **Rendezvous** stables and the outdoor store shed are moved over. I thought to have a



lot of **Red** **Edies** to help me. They are very nice & great fun, but although they are very quick they don't get on fast, for they turn everything into a game. Even digging snow. And they will play with

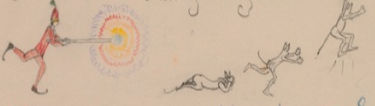
SIXTY
AS/IN

that they are supposed to be asking.
B. From remember him, at what one black, un-
December the 13th is that pooka a lucky hat
some (HAR HAR) after all. Eyn had to wear
& sheepskin coat & red shoes for his pass. And
he had got a hood on and red
shoes he looks
rather like
St Anthony
he does not very



much. Any way he carries things in his hood - has
brought Chook his sponge and Soap in
it!

It says that we have not seen the East of the
Word - most of the battles in 1931. They
don't dare to come into my land yet. but for some
reason they are breeding Casans and multiplying
all over the world. Quite a nasty outbreak!
But there are not so many in England, he says.
I expect I shall have trouble with them soon.
I have given my elves



Some new magic sparkler spears that
will scare them out of their wits. It is now
December 24 and they have not appeared
this year - and practically everything is packed
up and ready. I shall be starting soon

1931

Send you all John, Michael & Father
Presaline my love and good wishes
on a happy Christmas. tons of good wishes. Pass
on a few if you don't want them all!

SNIP
10K6
*

Polar Bear (in case you don't know
what PB is) sends love to you and to the
Bingos and to Orange Teddy and to Fabilee
(Oye I hear lots of news even in Snowy Swarth)
My messengers will be about until the New
Year if you want to write and tell me anything
at all right. I hope you enjoy the

PANTOMIME



Your loving
Father Christmas

PS P&Y are well again. Only Ramps. They will
beat my leg party on St Stephen's Day with other
polar cats, cave cats, snowballs, elves, and
all the rest.



December 24 1935

North Pole

My dear Children

Here we are again. Christmas seems to come round pretty soon again: always much the same and always different. No ink this year and no water, so no painted pictures; also very cold hands, so very wobbly writing.

Last year it was very warm, but this year it is frightfully cold—snow, snow, snow, and ice. We have been simply buried, messengers have got lost and found themselves in Nova Scotia, if you know where that is, instead of in Scotland; and PB, if you know who that is, could not get home.

This is a picture of my house about a week ago before we got the reindeer sheds dug out. We had to make a tunnel to the front door. There are only three windows upstairs shining through holes—and there is steam where the snow is melting off the dome and roof.

This is a view from my bedroom window. Of course, snow coming down is not blue—but blue is cold: You can understand why your letters were slow in going. I hope I got them all, and anyway that the right things arrive for you.

Poor old PB, if you know who I mean, had to go away soon after the snow began last month. There was some trouble in his family, and Paksu and Valkotukka were ill. He is very good at doctoring anybody but himself.

But it is a dreadfully long way over the ice and snow—to North Greenland I believe. And when he got there he could not get back. So I have been rather held up, especially as the Reindeer stables and the outdoor store sheds are snowed over.

I have had to have a lot of Red Elves to help me. They are very nice and great fun; but although they are very quick they don't get on fast. For they turn everything into a game. Even digging snow. And they will play with the toys they are supposed to be packing.

PB, if you remember him, did not get back until Friday December 13th—so that proved a lucky day for me after all!

(HEAR HEAR!)

Even he had to wear a sheepskin coat and red gloves for his paws. And he had got a hood on and red gloves. He thinks he looks rather like Rye St Anthony. But of course he does not very much. Anyway he carries things in his hood—he brought home his sponge and soap in it!

He says that we have not seen the last of the goblins—in spite of the battles in 1933. They won't dare to come into my land yet; but for some reason they are breeding again and multiplying all over the world. Quite a nasty outbreak. But there are not so many in England, he says. I expect I shall have trouble with them soon.

I have given my elves some new magic sparkler spears that will scare them out of their wits. It is now December 24th and they have not appeared this year—and practically everything is packed up and ready.

I shall be starting soon

I send you all—John and Michael and Christopher and Priscilla—my love and good wishes this Christmas: tons of good wishes. Pass on a few if you don't want them all! Polar Bear (in case you don't know what PB is) sends love to you—and to the Bingos and to Orange Teddy and to Jubilee. (O yes I learn lots of news even in Snowy weather). My messengers will be about until the New Year if you want to write and tell me everything was all right.

I hope you enjoy the pantomime

Your loving

Father Christmas

PS Paksu and Valkotukka are well again. Only mumps. They will be at my big party on St Stephen's Day with other polar cubs, cave cubs, snowbabies, elves, and all the rest.



Haste



Nos. / *
560783
560784

CHRISTOPHER
&
PRISCILLA

*
Deliver on Xmas
Ave. F.C.

1936



Cliff House
North Pole

Wednesday Dec 23rd

1936

My dear Children

I'm sorry I cannot send you a long letter to thank you for yours, but I am sending you a picture which will explain a good deal. It is a good thing your changed lists arrived before these awful events, or I could not have done anything about it. I do hope you will like what I am bringing and will forgive any mistakes, & I hope nothing will fall be wet! I am still so shaky and upset. I am getting one of my elves to write a bit more about things. I send very much love to you all.

Father C. says you will want to hear some news. PB has been quite good — Jo had been — though he has been rather tired. So has F.C. I think the Christmas business is getting rather too much for them. So a lot of us, red and green elves, have gone to live permanently at Cliff House, and be trained in the packing business. This, PB's idea. He also invented the number system, so that every child that F.C. deals with has a number and we also learn them well by heart, and all the addresses. That saves

a lot of writing. So many children have the same name that every packet used to have the address as well. PB said: I am going to have a brand year and help F.C. to get so forward we can have some fun ourselves on Xmas day. We all worked hard, and you will be surprised to hear that every single parcel is packed and numbered by Saturday last (Dec 19). Then PB said: I am tired out: I am going to have a hot bath and get to bed early! Well you can see what happened. F.C. was taking a last look round in the English Delivery Room about 10 o'clock when water poured through the ceiling and swamped everything: it was some 6 ins. deep on the floor. PB had simply got into the bath with both legs swimming and gone fast asleep, with one hand paw on the overflow. He had been asleep two hours when we woke him. F.C. was really angry. But PB, only said: I did have a jolly dream. I dreamt I was diving off a melting iceberg and chasing seals. He said later when he saw the damage: Well there some things; those children at Northpole Road (he always says that) I find may lose some of their presents, but they will have a letter with bearing this year. They can see a joke, even if some of you can't. That made F.C. angrier, and PB said: Well, draw a picture of it, and ask them 'Is this funny or not'. So F.C. ho. But he has begun to think it funny (although very annoying) himself, now we have cleared up the mess, yet the English presents repacked again. Just in time. We are all rather tired, so please excuse some of the writing. Yrs. Tiborok Secretary to F.C. Christmas

VERY SORRY. BEEN BIZY. CAN'T FIND THAT ALPHABET. WILL LOOK AFTER CHRISTMAS AND POST IT YRS. P.B.

You will find two snapshots in this letter. Give them back to your Mother. I hoped she has not missed them. One of my elves brought them. You will find out what for Yrs F.C.

Cliff House
North Pole
Wednesday Dec. 23rd 1936

My dear Children

I am sorry I cannot send you a long letter to thank you for yours, but I am sending you a picture which will explain a good deal. It is a good thing your changed lists arrived before these awful events, or I could not have done anything about it. I do hope you will like what I am bringing and will forgive any mistakes, and I hope nothing will still be wet! I am still so shaky and upset, I am getting one of my elves to write a bit more about things.

I send very much love to you all.

Father Christmas says you will want to hear some news. Polar Bear has been quite good—or had been—though he has been rather tired. So has Father Christmas; I think the Christmas business is getting rather too much for them.

So a lot of us, red and green elves, have gone to live permanently at Cliff House, and be trained in the packing business. It was Polar Bear's idea. He also invented the number system, so that every child that Father Christmas deals with has a number and we elves (learn them all by heart, and all the addresses. That saves a lot of writing.

So many children have the same name that every packet used to have the address as well. Polar Bear said: "I am going to have a record year and help Father Christmas to get so forward we can have some fun ourselves on Christmas day."

We all worked hard, and you will be surprised to hear that every single parcel was packed and numbered by Saturday (December 19th). Then Polar Bear said "I am tired out: I am going to have a hot bath, and go to bed early!"

Well you can guess what happened. Father Christmas was taking a last look round in the English Delivery Room about 10 o'clock when water poured through the ceiling and swamped everything: it was soon 6 inches deep on the floor. Polar Bear had simply got into the bath with both taps running and gone fast asleep with one hind paw on the overflow. He had been asleep two hours when we woke him.

Father Christmas was really angry. But Polar Bear only said: "I did have a jolly dream. I dreamt I was diving off a melting iceberg and chasing seals."

He said later when he saw the damage: "Well there is one thing: those children at Northpole Road, Oxford (he always says that) may lose some of their presents, but they will have a letter worth hearing this year. They can see a joke, even if none of you can!"

That made Father Christmas angrier, and Polar Bear said: "Well, draw a picture of it and ask them if it is funny or not." So Father Christmas has. But he has begun to think it funny (although very annoying) himself now we have cleared up the mess, and got the English presents repacked again. Just in time. We are all rather tired, so please excuse scrawly writing.

Yours, Ilbereth, Secretary to Father Christmas

Very sorry. Been bazy. Can't find that alphabet. Will look after Christmas and post it. Yours, Polar Bear.

Best
Wish
es
for
1
9
3
7
from
FC
&
PB
7



X
M
A
S
1
9
3
6
:
F
C
.

A Merry Christmas

I HAVE FOUND IT. I SEND YOU
A COPY. YOU NEEDNT. FILL IN
BLACK PARTS IF YOU DONT
WANT TO. IT TAKES RATHER
LONG TO RITE BUT I THINK
IT IS RATHER CLEVER.

STILL BIZY. F.C. SEZT CANT
HAVE A BATH TILL NEXT YEAR.
LOVE YOU YO BOTH BICAUSE
YOU SEE JOKES

P.B.

I GOT INTO HOT WATER
DIDNT I? HA! HA! P.B.

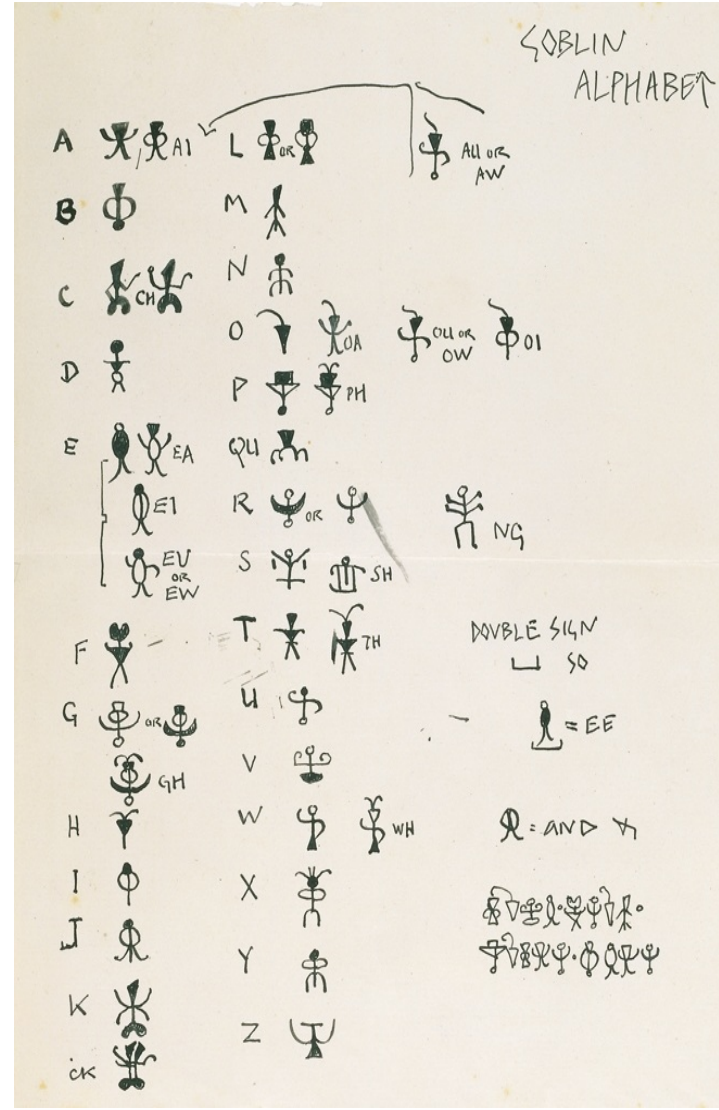
I have found it. I send you a copy. You needn't fill in black parts if you don't want to. It takes rather long to rite but I think it is rather clever.

Still bazy. Father Christmas sez I can't have a bath till next year.

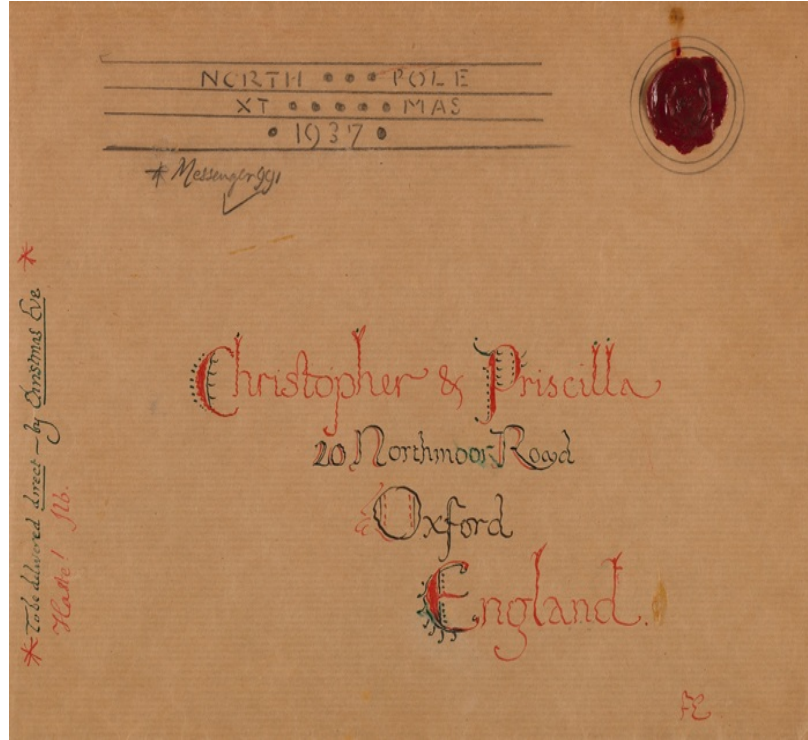
Love tou yo both bicause you see jokes

Polar Bear

I got into hot water didn't I? Ha! Ha!



1937



Miss House

North Pole

Christmas 1937

My dear Christopher and
Priscilla, and other old friends

at 20 Northmoor Road, Oxford: here we are again!

Of course I am always here (when not travelling), but you know what I mean.
Christmas again. I believe it is 17 years since I started to write to you. I wonder
if you have still got all my letters? I have not been able to keep quite as close, but
I have got some from every year. We had quite a fight this year. No letters came from
you. The one day early in December I sent a messenger who used to go to Oxford, a lot
but had not been there for a long while. And he said: "Their house is
empty and everything is sold. I was afraid something had happened, or that you had
all gone to school in some other town, and your father and mother had
moved. Of course, I know now, the messenger had been to your old house next
door! He complained that all the windows were shut and the chimneys all
blocked up. I was very glad indeed to get Priscilla's first letter, and your
two nice letters, and useful lists and hints, since Christopher came back.
I quite understand that School makes it difficult for you to write like you
used. And of course I have new children coming on my lists each year
so that I don't get less busy.

Tell your father I am sorry about his eyes and throat: I once had my eyes
very bad from snow-blindness, which comes from looking at sunlit snow. But
it got better. I hope Priscilla and your Mother and everyone else will be well on
Dec. 25. I am afraid I have not had any time to draw you a picture this year.
I once I strained my hand moving heavy boxes in the "cellar" (I hope
this you see) have read your letter in November, and could not start

my letters until later than usual, and my hand still gets tired quickly. But
Siberer—one of the cleverest Elves who I took on as a sec. (retained)
long ago—is becoming very good. He can write several alphabets now
for the Eskis (that is ordinary European like you are), Greek, Russian, Runic,
and Finnish Elvish. His writing is a bit scratchy, I think. He
has a very slender hand—and his drawing a bit scratchy, I think. He
has a name you what he calls a picture diary. I hope it will do. It
won't be quite like the one I have, but I'll use ink (and pencil).
He is going to finish this letter for me as I have to do some others. So
I will now send you lots of love, and I do hope that I have chosen the best things
out of your suggestion lists. I was going to send 'Hobbits'—(I am
sending away loads (mostly second editions) which I sent for only
a few days ago)—but I thought you would have lots, so I am sending
another one for your fairytale. Lots and lots of love. Father Christmas

1937

NON
REVUE

Dear Children: I am Siberer. I have written to you before. I am finishing for
Father Christmas. Shall I tell you about my pictures? Polar Bear and Valko
tukka and Paksu are always lazy after Christmas or rather after the St. Stephen's
Day party. F.C. is coming for breakfast in vain. Another day when P.B., as
usual was late Paksu threw a bath-sponge full of icy water on his face. P.B. chased
him all round the house and round the garden and then forgave him, because he had
not caught Paksu, but had found a huge appetite. We had terrible weather at the end
of winter and actually had rain. We could not go out for days. I have drawn P.B.
and his nephews when they did venture out. Paksu and V. have never gone away.
They like it so much that they have begged to stay. It was much too warm at the
North Pole this year. A large lake formed at the bottom of the Cliff, and the N.
Pole standing on an island. I have drawn a view looking South, so the Cliff is
on the other side. It was about mid-summer. The M.P.B. his nephews and lots of
polar cats used to come and bathe. Also seals. M.P.B. took to trying to paddle a boat
or canoe, but he fell in so often that the seals thought he liked it, and used to get
under the boat and help him. That made him annoyed. The spot did not last long
as the water froze again early in August. Then we began to begin to think of this
Christmas. In my picture F.C. is dividing up the lists and giving me
my special list—you are in it, that is why you numbers are on the board. M.P.B.
of course always pretends to be managing everything: that's why he is pointing,
but I am really looking to F.C. and I am selecting him not M.P.B.

RUDE LIARLY BARRING BOY

Cliff House,
North Pole
Christmas 1937

My dear Christopher and Priscilla, and other old friends in Oxford: here we are again!

Of course I am always here (when not travelling), but you know what I mean. Christmas again. I believe it is 17 years since I started to write to you. I wonder if you have still got all my letters? I have not been able to keep quite all yours, but I have got some from every year.

We had quite a fright this year. No letters came from you. Then one day early in December I sent a messenger who used to go to Oxford a lot but had not been there for a long while, and he said: "Their house is empty and everything is sold." I was afraid something had happened, or that you had all gone to school in some other town, and your father and mother had moved. Of course, I know now; the messenger had been to your old house next door! He complained that all the windows were shut and the chimneys all blocked up.

I was very glad indeed to get Priscilla's first letter, and your two nice letters, and useful lists and hints, since Christopher came back. I quite understand that School makes it difficult for you to write like you used. And of course I have new children coming on my lists each year so that I don't get less busy.

Tell your father I am sorry about his eyes and throat: I once had my eyes very bad from snow-blindness, which comes from looking at sunlit snow. But it got better. I hope Priscilla and your Mother and everyone else will be well on Dec. 25. I am afraid I have not had any time to draw you a picture this year. You see I strained my hand moving heavy boxes in the cellars in November, and could not start my letters until later than usual, and my hand still gets tired quickly. But Ilbereth - one of the cleverest Elves who I took on as a secretary not long ago - is becoming very good.

He can write several alphabets now - Arctic, Latin (that is ordinary European like you use), Greek, Russian, Runes, and of course Elvish. His writing is a bit thin and slanting - he has a very slender hand - and his drawing is a bit scratchy, I think. He won't use paints - he says he is a secretary and so only uses ink (and pencil). He is going to finish this letter for me, as I have to do some others.

So I will now send you lots of love, and I do hope that I have chosen the best things out of your suggestion lists. I was going to send 'Hobbits' - I am sending away loads (mostly second editions) which I sent for only a few days ago) - but I thought you would have lots, so I am sending another Oxford Fairy Story.

Lots and Lots of Love, Father Christmas

Dear Children:

I am Ilbereth. I have written to you before. I am finishing for Father Christmas. Shall I tell you about my pictures? Polar Bear and Valkotukka and Paksu are always lazy after Christmas, or rather after the St Stephen's Day party. Father Christmas is ringing for breakfast in vain. Another day when Polar Bear, as usual, was late

not true!

Paksu threw a bath-sponge full of icy water on his face. Polar Bear chased him all round the house

and round the garden and then forgave him, because he had not caught Paksu, but had found a huge appetite.

We had terrible weather at the end of winter and actually had rain. We could not go out for days. I have drawn Polar Bear and his nephews when they did venture out. Paksu and Valkotukka have never gone away. They like it so much that they have begged to stay.

It was much too warm at the North Pole this year. A large lake formed at the bottom of the Cliff, and left the North Pole standing on an island. I have drawn a view looking South, so the Cliff is on the other side. It was about mid-summer. The North Polar Bear, his nephews and lots of polar cubs used to come and bathe. Also seals. North Polar Bear took to trying to paddle a boat or canoe, but he fell in so often that the seals thought he liked it, and used to get under the boat and tip it up. That made him annoyed.

The sport did not last long as the water froze again early in August. Then we began to begin to think of this Christmas. In my picture Father Christmas is dividing up the lists and giving me my special lot - you are in it.

North Polar Bear of course always pretends to be managing everything: that's why he is pointing, but I am really listening to Father Christmas and I am saluting him not North Polar Bear.

Rude little errand boy.

We had a glorious bonfire and fireworks to celebrate the Coming of Winter and the beginning of real 'Preparations'. The Snow came down very thick in November and the elves and snowboys had several tobogganing half-holidays. The polar cubs were not good at it. They fell off, and most of them took to rolling or sliding down just on themselves. Today—but this is the best bit, I had just finished my picture, or I might have drawn it differently.

And better!

Polar Bear was being allowed to decorate a big tree in the garden, all by himself and a ladder. Suddenly are heard terrible growly squealy noises. We rushed out to find Polar Bear hanging on the tree himself

"You are not a decoration," said Father Christmas.

"Anyway, I am alright," he shouted.

He was. We threw a bucket of water over him. Which spoilt a lot of the decorations, but saved his fur. The silly old thing had rested the ladder against a branch (instead of the trunk of the tree). Then he thought, "I will just light the candles to see if they are working," although he was told not to. So he climbed to the tip of the ladder with a taper. Just then the branch cracked, the ladder slipped on the snow, and Polar Bear fell into the tree and caught on some wire; and his fur got caught on fire.

Poor joke.

Luckily he was rather damp or he might have fizzled. I wonder if roast Polar is good to eat?

Not as good as well spanked and fried elf.

The last picture is imaginary and not very good... But I hope it will come true. It will if Polar Bear behaves. I hope you can read my writing. I try to write like dear old Father Christmas (without the trembles), but I cannot do so well. I can write EÍvish better:

ᏌᏌᏌᏌ ᏌᏌᏌᏌ ᏌᏌᏌᏌᏌᏌᏌᏌ ᏌᏌ ᏌᏌ ᏌᏌ

That is some - but Father Christmas says I write even that too spidery and you would never read it.

Love IÍbereth.

A big hug and lots of love. Enormous thanks for letters. I don't get many, though I work so harrd. I am practising new writing with lovely thick pen. Quicker than Arctick. I invented it.

Ilbereth is cheky. How are the Bingos? A merry Christmas. North Polar Bear

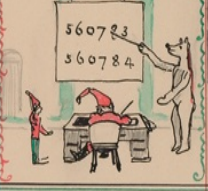
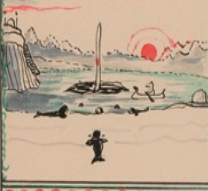


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Nobody wants breakfast after Christmas. NPB, Paul Vaire tired (and full). 1926.

A sponge is useful for making up N.P.B. but makes him angry.

Late Spring 1937. Thaw and rain. Going for a nice walk to find a lost spruce.



Midsummer. Great hole appears in ice. Sals come out. NPB likes to bake.

Beginning to think of next Christmas. NPB's getting orders from FC.

Celebrating the Coming of Winter. Bonfire party and fireworks.



Tobogganing down from Cliff House. Snowboys have a good time.

Today, Dec. 23rd. NPB busy with the tree - before the disaster.

Tomorrow. Starting with the first load. (16)

A. Merry Christmas 1937 FC.

Cliff House

North Pole

Christmas 1938.



Y dear **Priscilla** and all others at your house. Here we are again! Bless me, I believe I said that before — but after all you don't want Christmas to be different each year, do you? I am frightfully sorry that I haven't had the time to draw any big picture this year, and I believe my secretary has not done one either, but we are all sending you some rhymes instead. Some of my other children seem to like rhymes, so perhaps you will.

We have all been very sorry to hear about **Christopher**. I hope he is better and will have a jolly **Christmas**. I only heard lately when my messengers & letters & collectors came back from Oxford. Tell him to cheer up — and although he is now growing up & leaving stockings behind, I shall bring a few things along this year. Among them is a small astronomy book which gives a few hints on the use of telescopes — thank you for telling me he had got one. Dear me! my hand is shaky — I hope you can read some of this?

I loved your long letter, with all the amusing pictures. Give my love to your **Bugs** and all the other sixty (or more!), especially **Fluggles** and **Fuddles** and **Tinker** and **Tailor** and **Whale** and **Snodgrass**. I hope you will go on writing to me for a long while yet.

Very much love to you — and lots for **Chris** — from

Father Christmas

Cliff House,
North Pole
Christmas 1938

My dear Priscilla and all others at your house

Here we are again! Bless me, I believe I said that before—but after all you don't want Christmas to be different each year, do you?

I am frightfully sorry that I haven't had the time to draw any big picture this year, and Ilbereth (my secretary) has not done one either; but we are all sending you some rhymes instead. Some of my other children seem to like rhymes, so perhaps you will.

We have all been very sorry to hear about Christopher. I hope he is better and will have a jolly Christmas. I only heard lately when my messengers and letter collectors came back from Oxford. Tell him to cheer up—and although he is now growing up and leaving stockings behind, I shall bring a few things along this year. Among them is a small astronomy book which gives a few hints on the use of telescopes—thank you for telling me he had got one. Dear me! My hand is shaky—I hope you can read some of this?

I loved your long letter, with all the amusing pictures. Give my love to your Bingos and all the other sixty (or more!), especially Raggles and Preddley and Tinker and Tailor and Jubilee and Snowball. I hope you will go on writing to me for a long while yet.

Very much love to you—and lots for Chris—from

Father Christmas



1938

SETTING OUT.

Rhyme.

Gain this year my dear Priscilla,
when you're asleep upon your pillow;
beside your bed old Father Christmas

BAD rhyme!
that's beaten you!



The English language has no rhyme
to Father Christmas; that's why I'm
not very good at making verses.
But what I find a good deal worse is
that girls and boys names won't rhyme either
(and bother! either won't rhyme neither).
So please forgive me dear Priscilla,
if I jumble in rhyme with pillow!

she won't

As I was saying— beside your bed old Father Christmas
(afraid that any creek or hiss must
wake you up) will in a twinkling
fill up your stocking I've an inkling
that belongs in fact to Peter—
but never mind! At twelve, or later,
he will arrive—and hopes once more
that he has chosen from his store
the things you want. You're half past nine;
but still I hope you'll drop a line
for some years yet I won't forget
old Father Christmas and his Det,
the N.P.D (and Polar Cubs
as far as little butter tubs),
and snowboys and Elves—in fact the whole
of my household up near the Pole.
Then my list, made in December,
your number is, if you remember,
fifty six thousand, seven hundred,
and eighty five. It can't be wondered
at that I am so busy when
you think that you are nearly ten.

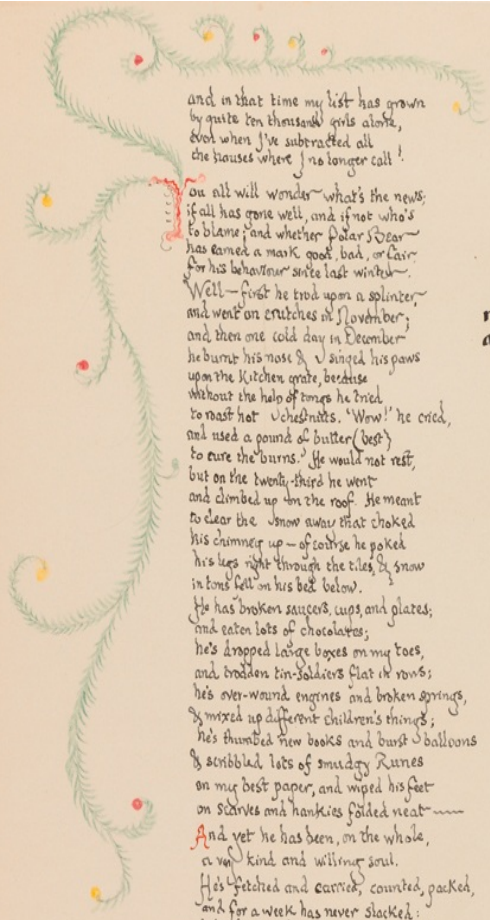
How's that? S.C.
OUT! P.P.

I did it
the end of a clock!

bits by P.H.V.

wreat!

Had to help for E. and
her through



and in that time my list has grown
by quite ten thousand girls alone,
even when I've subtracted all
the houses where I no longer call!

You all will wonder what's the news,
if all has gone well, and if not who's
to blame; and whether Polar Bear
has earned a mark good, bad, or fair
for his behaviour since last winter.

Well - first he trod upon a splinter,
and went on crutches in November;
and then one cold day in December
he burnt his nose & singed his paws
upon the kitchen grate, besides
without the help of tongs he tried
to roast hot chestnuts. 'Wow!' he cried,
and used a pound of butter (best)
to cure the burns. He would not rest,
but on the twenty-third he went
and climbed up on the roof. He meant
to clear the snow away that choked
his chimney up - of course he poked
his legs right through the tiles, & snow
in tons fell on his bed below.

He has broken saucers, cups and plates,
and eaten lots of chocolates;
he's dropped large boxes on my toes,
and broken tin-soldiers flat in rows;
he's over-wound engines and broken springs,
& mixed up different children's things;
he's thumbed new books and burst balloons
& scribbled lots of smudgy runes
on my best paper, and wiped his feet
on scarves and handkerchiefs folded neat.

And yet he has been, on the whole,
a very kind and willing soul.
He's fetched and carried, counted, packed,
and for a week has never slacked:
he's climbed the cellar-stairs at least
five thousand times - the **Dear Old Beast!**

**Just rhyming
nonsense: it was
a nail - rusty too**

I never did!

I was not given a
chance.

**you need not
believe all this!**

you need

hear hear!

*just rhyming
nonsense
V. P.*



Smis love
Taksu and Valkotikka -
 They are still with me, & they don't look a
 year older; but they're just a bit
 more wise, & have a pinch more wit.

The GOBLINS, you'll be glad to hear,
 have not been seen at all this year,
 not near the Dole. But I am told,
 they're moving South, and getting bold,
 & coming back to many lands,
 and making with their wicked hands
 new mines & caves. So do not fear!
 They'll hide away, when I appear!



Christmas Day. Postscript by Morith.

Now Christmas Day has come round again
 and poor N.P.B. has got a bad pain!
 They say he's swallowed a couple of pounds
 of nuts without cracking the shells! It sounds
 a Polish sort of thing to do -
 but that isn't all, between me and you;
 he's eaten a ton of various goods
 and recklessly mixed all his favourite foods,
 honey with ham and turkey with treacle,
 and pickles with milk. I think that a week'll
 be needed to put the old bear on his feet.
 And I mustn't forget his particular treat:
 plum-pudding with saucy sauce and hoki'sh delight
 covered with cream and decorated at a bite!
 And after this dish he stood on his head -
 it's rather a wonder the poor fellow's not dead!

Absolute ROT:
 I have not got
 a pain in my pot.
 I do not eat
 turkey or meat:
 I stick to the sweet.

Quite funny!

Again this year, my dear Priscilla,
when you're asleep upon your pillow;

**Bad rhyme!
That's beaten you!**

beside your bed old Father Christmas

[The English language has no rhyme
to Father Christmas: that's why I'm
not very good at making verses.
But what I find a good deal worse is
that girls' and boys' names won't rhyme either
(and bother! either won't rhyme neither).
So please forgive me, dear Priscilla,
if I pretend you rhyme with pillow!]

She won't.

As I was saying—

beside your bed old Father Christmas
(afraid that any creak or hiss must

How's that?
Out!

wake you up) will in a twinkling
*fill up your stocking, (I've an inkling
that it belongs, in fact, to pater.
but never mind!)* At twelve, or later,
he will arrive—and hopes once more
that he has chosen from his store

I did it.

the things you want. You're half past nine;

She is not a clock!

but still I hope you'll drop a line
for some years yet, and won't forget
old Father Christmas and his Pet,
the North Polar Bear (and Polar Cubs
as fat as little butter-tubs),
and snowboys and Elves—in fact the whole
of my household up near the Pole.

Upon my list, made in December,
your number is, if you remember,
fifty six thousand, seven hundred,
and eighty five. It can't be wondered

Weak!

at that I am so busy, when
you think that you are nearly ten,
and in that time my list has grown
by quite ten thousand girls alone,
even when I've subtracted all
the houses where I no longer call!

You all will wonder what's the news;
if all has gone well, and if not who's
to blame; and whether Polar Bear
has earned a mark good, bad, or fair,
for his behaviour since last winter.
Well—first he trod upon a splinter,

**Just rhiming nonsens: it
was a nail—rusty, too**

and went on crutches in November;
and then one cold day in December
he burnt his nose and singed his paws
upon the Kitchen grate, because
without the help of tongs he tried
to roast hot chestnuts. "Wow!" he cried,

I never did!

and used a pound of butter (best)
to cure the burns. He would not rest,

I was not given a chance.

but on the twenty-third he went
and climbed up on the roof. He meant
to clear the snow away that choked
his chimney up—of course he poked
his legs right through the tiles and snow
in tons fell on his bed below.
He has broken saucers, cups, and plates;
and eaten lots of chocolates;
he's dropped large boxes on my toes,
and trodden tin-soldiers flat in rows;

You need not believe all this!

You need!

he's over-wound engines and broken springs,
and mixed up different children's things;
he's thumbed new books and burst balloons
and scribbled lots of smudgy Runes
on my best paper, and wiped his feet
on scarves and hankies folded neat—
And yet he has been, on the whole,
a very kind and willing soul.

He's fetched and carried, counted, packed
and for a week has never slacked:

here hear!

I wish you wouldn't scribble
on my nice rhyme!

he's climbed the cellar-stairs at least
five thousand times—the Dear Old Beast!

Paksu sends love and Valkotukka—

They are still with me, and they don't look a
year older, but they're just a bit
more wise, and have a pinch more wit.

The GOBLINS, you'll be glad to hear,
have not been seen at all this year,
not near the Pole. But I am told,
they're moving south, and getting bold,
and coming back to many lands,
and making with their wicked hands new mines and caves. But do not fear!
They'll hide away, when I appear.

Christmas Day

*Now Christmas Day has come round again—
and poor North Polar Bear has got a bad pain!
They say he's swallowed a couple of pounds
of nuts without cracking the shells! It sounds
a Polarish sort of thing to do—
but that isn't all, between me and you:
he's eaten a ton of various goods
and recklessly mixed all his favourite foods,
honey with ham and turkey with treacle,
and pickles with milk. I think that a week'll
be needed to put the old bear on his feet.
And I mustn't forget his particular treat:
plum pudding with sausages and turkish delight
covered with cream and devoured at a bite!
And after this dish he stood on his head—
it's rather a wonder the poor fellow's not dead!*

**Absolute ROT:
I have not got
a pain in my pot.**

Rude fellow!

**I do not eat
turkey or meat:**

I stick to the sweet.

Which is why

(as all know) I

am so sweet myself,

you thinuous elf!

Goodby!

He means fatuous

**No I don't, you're not fat,
but thin and silly.**

You know my friends too well to think
(although they're rather rude with ink)
that there are really quarrels here!
We've had a very jolly year
(except for Polar Bear's rusty nail);
but now this rhyme must catch the Mail—
a special messenger must go,
in spite of thickly falling snow,
or else this won't get down to you
on Christmas day. It's half past two!
We've quite a ton of crackers still
to pull, and glasses still to fill!
Our love to you on this Noel—
and till the next one, fare you well!

Father Christmas

Polar Bear

Ilbereth

Paksu and Valkotukka

1939

1939

BY HAND
with presents

1. .

Priscilla Tolkien



Cliff House

NORTH POLE

December 24th 1939

My dear Onscilla

I am glad you managed to send me two letters although you have been rather busy working. I hope your **Bingo** family will have a jolly Christmas, & behave themselves. Tell **Billy** — is not that the father's name? — not to be so cross. They are not to quarrel over the crackers I am sending.

I am afraid there is no **Basil** coming. I have not got any small **Bingos** left! But I am sending a lovely cream Aunt **GILLY** (which is short for Juliana) who will keep **Mully** in order. I hope, or take her place if she does not improve. I hope all the other things are what you want.

I am very busy and things are very difficult this year owing to this horrible war. Many of my messengers have never come back. I haven't been able to do you a very nice picture this year. It is supposed to show me carrying things down our new path to the sleigh-sheds

Paksu is in front with a grin looking most brightly pleased with himself (as usual). There is just a glimpse (quite enough) of P. B. strolling along behind. He is of course carrying nothing.

1
TOP
There have been no adventures here, and nothing funny has happened — and that is because P. B. has ~~not~~ done hardly anything "to help", as he calls it, this year. I don't think he has been lazier than usual, but he has been not at all well. He ate some fish that disagreed with him last November, and I was afraid he might have to go to hospital in Greenland. But after living only on warm water for a fortnight he suddenly threw the glass and jug out of the window and decided to get better.

BEST PART OF IT
He drew the bees in the picture. I am afraid they are not very good. They look more like umbrellas? Still he sends love to you and all your bears. "Why don't you have Polar Cubs instead of Bings & Koalas?" he says.

Give my love to Christopher and Michael (and to John when you next write).

LOVE

From

Father Christmas

WHY NOT?
PB

Cliff House,
NORTH POLE
December 24th 1939

My dear Priscilla

I am glad you managed to send me two letters although you have been rather busy working. I hope your Bingo family will have a jolly Christmas, and behave themselves. Tell Billy—is not that the father's name?—not to be so cross. They are not to quarrel over the crackers I am sending.

I am very busy and things are very difficult this year owing to this horrible war. Many of my messengers have never come back. I haven't been able to do you a very nice picture this year. It is supposed to show me carrying things down our new path to the sleigh-sheds. Paksu is in front with a torch looking most frightfully pleased with himself (as usual). There is just a glimpse (quite enough) of Polar Bear strolling along behind. He is of course carrying nothing.

There have been no adventures here, and nothing funny has happened—and that is because Polar Bear has done hardly anything to “help”, as he calls it, this year.

ROT!

I don't think he has been lazier than usual, but he has been not at all well. He ate some fish that disagreed with him last November and was afraid he might have to go to hospital in Greenland. But after living only on warm water for a fortnight he suddenly threw the glass and jug out of the window and decided to get better.

He drew the trees in the picture, and I am afraid they are not very good.

Best part of it

They look more like umbrellas! Still he sends love to you and all your bears. “Why don't you have Polar Cubs instead of Bingos and Koalas?” he says.

Why not?

Give my love to Christopher and Michael and to John when you next write.

Love from Father Christmas.

Christmas
1939
MCMXXXIX



Love to Priscilla
from Father Christmas

To my dear Priscilla
PC

=====
XMAS 1940
NP.
=====
Miss Priscilla Mary R. Tolkien
20 Northmoor Road
Oxford
England
EUROPE.

DEAR P.

1949

MONDAY

DEC 23

GLAD TO FIND YOU ARE BACK!

message came on Sat. that your house was empty. Was afraid you had gone without leaving any address. Am having very DIFFICULT time this year but am doing my our best

THANK YOU for explaining about your room.

F.L. sends love

blots Rather busy

Please excuse

Yours

P.B.

December 23rd 1940

Dear Priscilla

Glad to find you are back! Message came on Saturday that your house was empty. Wos afrade you had gon without leaving any address.

Ar having verry DIFFICULT time this year but ar doing ~~my~~ our best.

THANK YOU for explaining about your room. Father Christmas sends love! Please excuse blots. Rather bizzy.

Yours Polar Bear

1940

Cly House
near N. Pole
Christmas Eve
1940

My Dearest Pincille

Just a short letter to wish you a very happy Christmas. Please give my love to Christopher. We are having rather a difficult time this year. This horrible war is reducing all our stocks and in so many countries children are being far from their homes. P.B. has had a very busy time trying to get our address lists corrected. Mom and Dad are still at home. I wonder what you will think of my picture. Pincille's last live at the North Pole you will say. I know they don't, but we have got some all the same. What you would call "penguin's". I believe in a very nice word. Except that they can't come here to escape the war, but to find it. They had heard such stories of the hardships up in the North (including a wife witness story that P.B. and all the Polar Cub had been blown to and that I had been captured by Goblins) that they swam all the way here to see if they could help me. Nearly 50 arrived. This is a culture of P.B. dancing with their chiefs. They amuse us immensely; they have really help much, but are always playing funny dramatic games and trying to imitate the words of P.B. and the Cub's.

P.B. and all the Cub's are very well. They have really been very good this year. I have hardly had time to get into my mischief. I hope you will find most of the things that you wanted. I have sent some that I have no Cats Tongues. Let me know if you need any more. I hope you will like them. I will send them for you. All the same, I hope your stockings will be full.

VERY MUCH LOVE FROM YOUR
OLD FRIEND
Father Christmas.



Miss M.R. Talbot
Oxford
ENGLAND

22

Cliff House,
near North Pole
Christmas Eve 1940

My Dearest Priscilla

Just a short letter to wish you a very happy Christmas. Please give my love to Christopher. We are having rather a difficult time this year. This horrible war is reducing all our stocks, and in so many countries children are living far from their homes. Polar Bear has had a very busy time trying to get our address-lists corrected. I am glad you are still at home!

I wonder what you will think of my picture. "Penguins don't live at the North Pole," you will say. I know they don't, but we have got some all the same. What you would call "evacuees", I believe (not a very nice word); except that they did not come here to escape the war, but to find it! They had heard such stories of the happenings up in the North (including a quite untrue story that Polar Bear and all the Polar Cubs had been blown up, and that I had been captured by Goblins) that they swam all the way here to see if they could help me. Nearly 50 arrived.

The picture is of Polar Bear dancing with their chiefs. They amuse us enormously: they don't really help much, but are always playing funny dancing games, and trying to imitate the walk of Polar Bear and the Cubs.


Very much love from your old friend,
Father Christmas



1941

MISS P.M.R. TOLKIEN
20 NORTHMOOR
RD.
OXFORD
ENGLAND

PB.

Two red wax seals are positioned below the address, one to the left and one to the right of a horizontal line. The seal on the left is partially broken and shows some internal structure, while the seal on the right is more intact and circular.

Cliff House
near (stump of) N. Pole
December 22nd 1941.

My Dearest PISCILLA

I am so glad you did not forget to write to me again. This year the number of children who keep up with me seems to be getting smaller. I expect it is because of this horrible war, and that when it is over things will improve again, and I shall be as busy as ever. But at present so terribly many people have lost their homes; or have left them; half the world seems in the wrong place. And even up here we have been having troubles. I don't mean only with my stores, of course they are getting low. They were already last year, and I have not been able to fill them up, so that I have now to send what I can instead of what is asked for. But worse than that has happened. I expect you remember that some years ago we had trouble with the Goblins; and we thought we had sealed it. Well it broke out again this autumn worse than it has been for centuries. We have several battles, and for a while my house was besieged. In November it began to look likely that it would be captured and all my goods, and that Christmas Stockings would all remain empty all over the world. Would not that have been a calamity? It has not happened - and that is largely due to the efforts of P. B. - but it was not until the beginning of this month that I was able to

NB
THANKS
MEE!

THERE
WERE
MILLIONS
100000
000
OK.

and out our messengers! I expect the Goblins thought that with so much
war going on this was a fine chance to reach the North. They must
have been preparing for some years; and they made a huge new business which
had an outlet many miles away. It was early in October that
they suddenly came out in thousands. P.B. says there were at least a million,
but that is the farthest I can number. I suppose he was still fast asleep at
the time, and I was rather "chomped" myself. The weather was rather warm
in the time of the year, and Christ was being far away. There were
only one or two sleds about the place, and a few Eskimo sleds and Yukon
sleds (also fast asleep). The Goblins had all come away in the spring.
Luckily Goblins cannot help melting and boiling on a stove when they
mean to fight; some all woke up in time, and set the gates and doors
barred and the windows shuttered. P.B. got on the roof and fired rockets
into the Goblin hosts as they poured up the long reindeer-hair; but that
did not stop them for long. We were soon surrounded. I have not time to
tell you all the story. I had to blow three blasts on the great horn (Humbler),
it thinned over the air side of the hill, and if I have not told you about it before
the balance I had not had to blow it for (There now! I was interrupted
and its now Christmas Eve, and I don't know when I shall get finished!).

... over of hundred years: its sound carries as far as the North Wind blows.
At the same time it was three whole days before help came; muskoxen, polarbear, and
hundreds and hundreds of sleds. They came up behind the Goblins; and P.B.
(really awake this time) rushed out with a blazing branch off the fire in each
paw. He must have killed dozens of Goblins (he says a million). But there
was a big battle down in the glen near the N. Pole in November, in which
the Goblins brought hundreds of new companies out of their tunnels.
We were driven back to the Cliff, and it was not until P.B. and a party
of his younger relatives crept out by night, and blew up the entrance to
the new tunnels with nearly 100 lbs of gunpowder that we got the better
of them for the present. But being went all the stuff for making
fireworks and crackers (the cracking-powder) for some years. The N. Pole
cracked and fell over for the second time, and we have not yet had time
to mend it. P.B. is rather a hero (I hope he does not think so himself).
But of course he is a very MAGICAL animal really, and Goblins
can't do much to him, when he is awake and angry. I have seen their
arrows bouncing off him and breaking. Well, that will give you
some idea of cracks, and you will understand why I have not had

! DO!
P.B. →

being to draw a picture this year in rather a pity, because there had been
 such exciting things to draw - and why I have not been able to collect
 the usual things for you, or even the very few that you asked for.
 I am told that nearly all the Alison Uttley books have been burnt, and
 I could not find one of 'Moley Wamp'. I must try and get one for next time.
 I am sending you a few other books, which I hope you will like. There is
 not a great deal else, but I send you very much love
 I like to hear about your P.B. Jimmy, but really I think he is too old
 and important to hand up stockings! But P.B. seems to feel that
 any kind of bear is a violation. And he said to me "Leave it to me, old man
 (Oh! Samford & what he often calls me): I will pack a perfectly beautiful
 selection for his Poliness (yes, Poliness!)" So I shall try and bring
 the beautiful selection along: what he, I don't know!

VERY MUCH LOVE FROM
 your old friends

FATHER
 CHRISTMAS

P.B.

Mrs P.M.R. Tolkien
 OXFORD
 England.

Cliff House,
near (stump of) North Pole
December 22nd, 1941

My Dearest Priscilla,

I am so glad you did not forget to write to me again this year. The number of children who keep up with me seems to be getting smaller: I expect it is because of this horrible war, and that when it is over things will improve again, and I shall be as busy as ever. But at present so terribly many people have lost their homes: or have left them; half the world seems in the wrong place.

And even up here we have been having troubles. I don't mean only with my stores: of course they are getting low. They were already last year, and I have not been able to fill them up, so that I have now to send what I can instead of what is asked for. But worse than that has happened.

I expect you remember that some years ago we had trouble with the Goblins; and we thought we had settled it. Well, it broke out again this autumn, worse than it has been for centuries. We have had several battles, and for a while my house was besieged. In November it began to look likely that it would be captured and all my goods, and that Christmas Stockings would all remain empty all over the world.

Would not that have been a calamity? It has not happened—and that is largely due to the efforts of Polar Bear—

N.B. That's mee!

but it was not until the beginning of this month that I was able to send out any messengers! I expect the Goblins thought that with so much war going on this was a fine chance to recapture the North. They must have been preparing for some years; and they made a huge new tunnel which had an outlet many miles away.

It was early in October that they suddenly came out in thousands. Polar Bear says there were at least a million, but that is his favourite big number.

There wer at leest a hundred million.

Anyway, he was still fast asleep at the time, and I was rather drowsy myself; the weather was rather warm for the time of the year and Christmas seemed far away. There were only one or two elves about the place; and of course Paksu and Valkotukka (also fast asleep). The Penguins had all gone away in the spring.

Luckily Goblins cannot help yelling and beating on drums when they mean to fight; so we all woke up in time, and got the gates and doors barred and the windows shuttered. Polar Bear got on the roof and fired rockets into the Goblin hosts as they poured up the long reindeer-drive; but that did not stop them for long. We were soon surrounded.

I have not time to tell you all the story. I had to blow three blasts on the great Horn (Windbeam). It hangs over the fireplace in the hall, and if I have not told you about it before it is because I have not had to blow it for over 4 hundred years: its sound carries as far as the North Wind blows. All the same it was three whole days before help came: snowboys, polar bears, and hundreds and hundreds of elves.

They came up behind the Goblins: and Polar Bear (really awake this time) rushed out with a blazing branch off the fire in each paw. He must have killed dozens of Goblins (he says a million).

But there was a big battle down in the plain near the North Pole in November, in which the Goblins brought hundreds of new companies out of their tunnels. We were driven back to the Cliff, and it was not until Polar Bear and a party of his younger relatives crept out by night, and blew up the entrance to the new tunnels with nearly 100lbs of gunpowder that we got the better of them—for the present.

But bang went all the stuff for making fireworks and crackers (the cracking part) for some years. The North Pole cracked and fell over (for the second time), and we have not yet had time to mend it. Polar Bear is rather a hero (I hope he does not think so himself)

I DO!

But of course he is a very MAGICAL animal really,

N.B.

and Goblins can't do much to him, when he is awake and angry. I have seen their arrows bouncing off him and breaking.

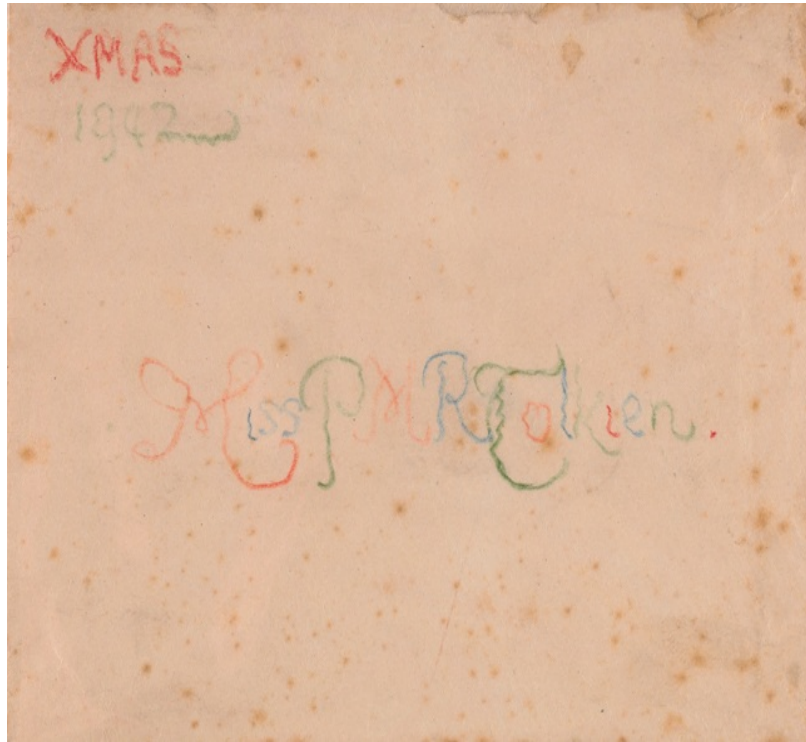
Well, that will give you some idea of events, and you will understand why I have not had time to draw a picture this year—rather a pity, because there have been such exciting things to draw—and why I have not been able to collect the usual things for you, or even the very few that you asked for.

I am told that nearly all the Alison Uttley books have been burnt, and I could not find one of 'Moldy Warp'. I must try and get one for next time. I am sending you a few other books, which I hope you will like. There is not a great deal else, but I send you very much love.

I like to hear about your Bear Bingo, but really I think he is too old and important to hang up stockings! But Polar Bear seems to feel that any kind of bear is a relation. And he said to me, "Leave it to me, old man (that, I am afraid is what he often calls me): I will pack a perfectly beautiful selection for his Poliness (yes, Poliness!)" . So I shall try and bring the 'beautiful selection' along: what it is, I don't know!

Very much love from your old friend Father Christmas and **Polar Bear**

1942



Cliff House.

NORTH POLE.

Christmas Eve
1942.

CHRISTMAS 1942.

My dear Pissilla, *???*

P.B. tells me that he cannot find any letter from you among this year's piles. I hope he has not lost any; he is so untidy. Still I expect you have been very busy this autumn at your new job. I have had to guess what you would like. I think I know fairly well, and luckily we are still pretty well off for books and things of that sort. But really you know I have never seen my stocks so low or my cellars so full of empty places as P.B. says although he is not an Irish bear. I am hoping that I shall be able to replenish them before long; but then there is so much waste and smashing going on that it makes me rather sad and anxious too. Divorces too are more difficult than ever this year with damaged houses and houseless people and all the dreadful events going on in your countries. Of course it just as tedious and mummy in my land as ever it was. We had our snow early this year and then nice crisp frosty nights to keep it white and firm and bright sunny days (no sun just now of course). I am giving as long a party tomorrow night as ever I did, polar caps & T. of course among them, and snobags and shoes. We are having the tree indoors this year in the hall at the foot of the great staircase, and I hope P.B. does not fall down the stairs and crash into it. There is all decorated and lit up. I hope you will not mind my bringing this little letter along with your things tonight. I am short of messengers, as some have great trouble in finding people and have been away for days. Just now I caught P.B. in my pantry and I am sure he had been to a cupboard. I don't know why. He had wrapped up a mysterious small parcel which he wants me to bring to you - well not exactly to you (he said). She has got a bear too, as you ought to remember. Well my dear here is very much love from Father Christmas once more, and very good wishes for 1943. *F*

* No battles at all this year. Quiet as quiet. I think the Goblins were really crushed this time. Windblow is hanging over the mantelpiece and is quite dusty again, I am glad to see. But P.B. has spent lots of time this year making fresh gingerbread - just in case of trouble. He said "wauln't that goblins p/0"

little Billy like being here!" I don't know what he was talking about, unless
it was about your bear. does he eat gunpowder?!

LOVE FROM P.B. YOU'LL FIND OUT
ABOUT THE PANTRY! HA' HA' I KNOW WHAT YOU
LIKE. DON'T LET THAT B.B. EAT IT ALL.

P.B.



Cliff House,
North Pole
Christmas Eve 1942

My dear Priscilla,

Polar Bear tells me that he cannot find my letter from you among this year's piles. I hope he has not lost any: he is so untidy. Still I expect you have been very busy this autumn at your new school.

I have had to guess what you would like. I think I know fairly well, and luckily we are still pretty well off for books and things of that sort. But really, you know, I have never seen my stocks so low or my cellars so full of empty places (as Polar Bear says).

I am hoping that I shall be able to replenish them before long; though there is so much waste and smashing going on that it makes me rather sad, and anxious too. Deliveries too are more difficult than ever this year with damaged houses and houseless people and all the dreadful events going on in your countries. Of course it is just as peaceful and merry in my land as ever it was.*

We had our snow early this year and then nice crisp frosty nights to keep it white and firm, and bright starry 'days' (no sun just now of course).

I am giving as big a party tomorrow night as ever I did, polar cubs (Paksu and Valkotukka, of course, among them) and snowboys, and elves. We are having the Tree indoors this year—in the hall at the foot of the great staircase, and I hope Polar Bear does not fall down the stairs and crash into it after it is all decorated and lit up.

I hope you will not mind my bringing this little letter along with your things tonight: I am short of messengers, as some have great trouble in finding people and have been away for days. Just now I caught Polar Bear in my pantry, and I am sure he had been to a cupboard. I do not know why.

He has wrapped up a mysterious small parcel which he wants me to bring to you—well not exactly to you (he said): "She has got a bear too, as you ought to remember."

Well my dear here is very much love from Father Christmas once more, and very good wishes for 1943.

*No battles at all this year. Quiet as quiet. I think the Goblins were really crushed this time. Windbeam is hanging over the mantelpiece and is quite dusty again, I am glad to say. But Polar Bear has spent lots of time this year making fresh gunpowder—just in case of trouble. He said, "wouldn't that grubby little Billy like being here!" I don't know what he was talking about, unless it was about your bear: does he eat gunpowder?

**You'll find out about the pantry! Ha! Ha! I know wot you like. Don't let that Billy Bear eat it all!
Love from Polar Bear.**

Messige to Billy Bear from Polar Bear Sorry I could not send you a really good bomb. All our powder has gone up in a big bang. You would have seen wot a really good exploashion is like. If you'd been there.

1943

Anne Quer.
Miss Priscilla Mary Tolkien
28 Northmoor Road
Oxford
England

Ciff House

N.P.

Christmas 1943.

My dear Priscilla

A very happy Christmas! I suppose you will be hanging up your stockings just once more: I hope so for I have still a few little things for you. After this I shall have to say "goodbye" more or less: I mean, I shall not forget you. We always keep the old numbers of our old friends, and their letters; and later on we hope to come back when they are grown up and have houses of their own and children.

My messengers tell me that people call it "grim" this year. I think they mean miserable: and so it is, I fear, in very many places where I was specially fond of going (like Germany); but I am very glad to hear that you are still not really miserable. Don't be! I am still very much alive, and shall come back again soon, as merry as ever. There has been no damage in my country; and though my stocks are running rather low I hope to put that right.

I AM REPLY

PS - a too "tired" to write himself; so he says, sends a special message to you: love and a hug! He says: do tell if she still has a bear called Billy Billy, or something like that; or is he worn out?

Give my love to the others: John & Michael & Chris & Sophie - and of course to all your pets that you used to tell me about.

P.T.O.

As I have not got very many of the things you usually
want, I am ~~send~~ ~~ing~~ ~~to~~ you some ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~best~~
clean money ~~and~~ I have lots ~~of~~ ~~it~~ that (more than you have,
I expect, but is not very much use to me, perhaps it will be
to you). You might find it useful to buy a book with
that you ~~really~~ ~~want~~ ~~to~~ ~~buy~~ ~~with~~
from your old friend ~~to~~ ~~you~~ ~~and~~ ~~your~~ ~~family~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~children~~
Very much love ~~to~~ ~~you~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~children~~

Father Christmas.



Cliff House,
North Pole,
Christmas 1943

My dear Priscilla

A very happy Christmas! I suppose you will be hanging up your stocking just once more: I hope so for I have still a few little things for you. After this I shall have to say “goodbye”, more or less: I mean, I shall not forget you. We always keep the old numbers of our old friends, and their letters; and later on we hope to come back when they are grown up and have houses of their own and children.

My messengers tell me that people call it “grim” this year. I think they mean miserable: and so it is, I fear, in very many places where I was specially fond of going; but I am very glad to hear that you are still not really miserable. Don’t be! I am still very much alive, and shall come back again soon, as merry as ever. There has been no damage in my country; and though my stocks are running rather low I hope soon to put that right.

Polar Bear - too “tired” to write himself (so he says)—

I am, reely

sends a special message to you: love and a hug! He says: do ask if she still has a bear called Silly Billy, or something like that; or is he worn out?

Give my love to the others: John and Michael and Christopher—and of course to all your pets that you used to tell me about. Polar Bear and all the Cubs are very well. They have really been very good this year and have hardly had time to get into any mischief.

I hope you will find most of the things that you wanted and I am very sorry that I have no ‘Cats’ Tongues’ left. But I have sent nearly all the books you asked for. I hope your stocking will seem full!

Very much love from your old friend,
Father Christmas.



✕^a merry christmas.

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LETTERS FROM
FATHER CHRISTMAS

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