

**MY MOTHER'S NAME WAS MARY**

***“Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God...  
you will bear a son, and you shall call his name, Jesus.”***

I came upon my baby book for the first time just a few months ago. I've been trying to transcribe my mother's handwritten reports.

Christmas is a good time to read one's baby book. It's not quite the same as Luke, but it's sort of wondrous in its own way. My mother gave birth to her first born son and when I was three days old they named me after my mother's father, Arthur.

I thought I heard the voice of angels and even a bit of a chorus in there.

My mother, Mary, had sisters Ruth and Esther. This is sounding more like the Bible all the time. My Aunt Esther and my mother Mary were pregnant at the same time, sort of like Mary and Elizabeth. So my cousin Bob was born six months before me, Just like Jesus' cousin, John, was born before Jesus.

My mother was overjoyed at motherhood, so much so that she added three more brothers after me. I can read wonder in her words.

My mother reports that my Grandmother Morgan said she saw me smile when I was three weeks old. Sort of a miracle, I would guess, since she was legally blind. I hope it really happened. Stories and legends follow most birth stories.

My mother Mary wrote in biblical fashion:

***“My little baby Arthur  
you came into this world with two parents who love each other  
and love the little son who has been born to them,  
and who want that son to grow into  
a good, strong, useful, happy manhood.”***

(Gospel of Mary 1:3)

Her report from my first Christmas reminds me of the coming of the Magi bringing gifts to the new-born Jesus. Obviously, homage beyond the ordinary!

***“Baby's first Christmas — a dear, happy, healthy, large baby...  
For Christmas he received all kinds of toys,  
celluloid toys and jingles from his Grandfather Morgan.  
a wagon, clown doll and stuffed bunny from Grandmother Morgan, Aunt Violet and Walter,  
a ball from his Aunt Esther and Uncle Charles,  
a snuggle rug and wooden animal from his Aunt Ruth and Uncle Charles,  
a wool knit legging suit from his Grandfather Weage,  
four pretty bibs from Great Aunt Dell  
two pairs of pink rubber pants from Cousin Esther and Alfred,  
and a set of wooden animals from Cousin Evan and Maude.”***

(Gospel of Mary 1:19)

Plenty enough animals for a manger scene! No mention of perfume or gold.

I don't mean to go further in how Luke's overflowing adoration of Jesus is echoed by my mother's adoration of her first-born. That adoration carried through for my three brothers as well; whose stories she was not hesitant to tell. Just like Luke says as he ends Jesus' birth story:

***“His father and his mother marveled at what was said about him.”***

How about adding one of my Christmas Eve Prayers from the Old World Deli?

***“Now may the peace of Christmas be among us...  
and most of all among those who suffer its absence.  
May every child in the world be adored...  
if not by kings and angels and shepherds,  
at least by the rest of us — For Jesus sake!”***

Art Morgan, December 9, 2014