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I am not a story writer but at this time I have to make an exception and tell everyone my true story about our first Christmas in this country. This is the best way to thank, once more, all those people who made that Christmas a special and unforgettable one for us.

I came to Canada 40 years ago to work for J.W. Stephens, a building supply and construction company in Sydney. It was one of the two largest building companies in Cape Breton, located on Townsend Street, where the railroad tracks cut through the city.

Nine months after my arrival, my family: my wife and 15-month-old daughter, and mother-in-law were coming to join me. Their boat was due to arrive in Halifax just before Christmas.

Before I left for Halifax to meet them, Greg, the company accountant, suggested that a set of my apartment keys be left with him so that in case of a cold spell he could look after the water pipes.

The boat with my family arrived on Christmas Eve and we spent the night on the train travelling to Sydney. On the morning of Christmas Day, tired but happy, we arrived at our apartment.

As we entered it, we could not believe our eyes. On the table there was a nice, little Christmas tree decorated with lights and all the trimmings. Next to it was a box with a turkey and everything else needed for a full Christmas dinner. All this was from the office staff. We were overwhelmed!

Now, after 40 years remembering our many previous Christmases, our first Christmas in this country seems to be the most remembered, thanks to you - Greg, Ed, Jeff, Agnes, Delores, Barrett, Sandy and the others. Merry Christmas to all of you and your families.

