



8-26-1853

Letter from John W. H. Baker to Julia Ann Baker, 1853 Aug. 26

John W. H. Baker

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Letter 2

Kingston, Island of Jamaica

Saturday P. M. 6 o'clock

August 26th 1853

My dear Wife

I thought I would commence a line to you today as we are lying at the wharf taking in coal to supply our engine. We have here a scene such as you or myself never dreamed of, but we can see negro life in full bloom here. The coal is brought on board by negro men & women in tubs of the size of half a barrel upon their heads. The women are clad very slightly and many of the boys and girls have nothing but a striped frock which comes scarcely to their knees -- I suppose Fredy and Sis would like to see the little Negro boys in the sea about the boat diving into the water after 5 & 10 cent pieces thrown to see them go under the water after them.

The scene here has been one of perfect noise and confusion since about 8 o'clock this morning at which time we arrived at the wharf, We are in a region where heat is quite oppressive we have had showers about us quite a good share of the time for two days past. Yesterday P. M. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ o'clock we encountered a squall of wind & rain which continued until about 6 o'clock, and then had a rough sea until into the night Mary & myself & a Mr. Moore & wife went ashore to dinner to-day and had a very good meal which we enjoyed very much and had to pay \$1.50 each. But in an extreme a man will pay almost any thing for it has done me more good than 3 visits from a physician.

By the way I think I ought to say that Mary & myself have had a very severe time of it with sea sickness which I cannot think of endeavoring to describe now but in some future

Letter 2

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time I will endeavor to inform you in full-- I can only say now to Oliver B. Stobridge & family never to undertake the voyage to Cal. for I have experienced enough already to say that he is much better off in his quiet N. E. home than he could be in the risk he would be obliged to undergo in the journey by sea, even that for himself and family would not pay him if he were to succeed ever so well in Cal. We are feeling very much refreshed in comparison with our feelings yesterday and hope to get along without much more of that deathly feeling we have felt in the passage thus far. I write this here thinking I may be so indisposed that I may not feel able to write you when we arrive at the Isthmus. I may furnish an addition to be enclosed with this --

It is now so dark that I shall be obliged to close this short line. I should like a descriptive tack and then I would give you some discription of the appearance of the Island and the inhabitants here but as that is out of my line especially at this time, I must barely say we will start to-morrow morn for Aspinwall, which is the place of landing on this side the Isthmus. We are about 50 hours sail from that place and shall probably arrive there on Tuesday next. But it is now so dark that I must say good night.

From your Husband

John W. H. Baker