



9-13-1854

Letter from John W. H. Baker to Julia Ann Baker, 1854 Sept. 5

John W. H. Baker

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Letter 33

-2-

know he would were I to leave him.

I barely write this that you may have the latest news possible from me--With my love for yourself and the children, I remain

Your Affectionate Husband
John W. H. Baker

Letter 34

Mokelumne Hill, Sept. 13th, 1854

My Dear Wife

In the confusion of work and business I have neglected my usual semi-monthly letter to this late date. But remembering my disappointment some months since upon not receiving ~~a~~ my regular letter, and my promise to you that I would let no opportunity escape of sending my letter to you every mail, I make a short matter of it by writing this evening. Since I last wrote, I have been to San Francisco and purchased a supply of Drugs & Medicines. Saw there several of my friends and old acquaintances, among them Dustin Shattuck & Wife. Dustin was somewhat unwell, but they were pleasantly located and I judge doing pretty well. ^{Daniel} ~~David~~ Bryant was doing very well, was located in the city. Daniel is in most excellent health and good spirits. Called on George & Francis Brooks who are located in S. Francisco in trade. they are doing a pretty large business and I think making money. Saw Addison Gilmore there. he was just starting on his voyage to Paname. he is employed on board the Opposition Line fo Steamers from San Francisco to Panama and makes a trip once a month. I went by the way of Sacramento and stopped there one day in going down and two days on my return. Found the friends there all well and enjoying themselves finely. Tully had sold his team and is now engaged in the Boot & Shoe business. I guess doing pretty well. at any rate they seem to enjoy life pretty well since he is now able to be at or near home all the time. They seem to be the leading family in their church matters. He is deacon, and just at that time was getting subscriptions

Letter 34

-2-

for a new church edifice as theirs was burned by the fire which occurred there some time ago. I spent the Sabbath there and attended church. they held their meetings in the Theater. They have but two services during the Sabbath, one at 11 o'clock and the other at 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ P.M. during the evening the Minister united in the holy bonds of matrimony a Dr. Smith & Miss Wooley. A very singular feature of the A. M. service was the notices given out previous to the benediction, among which was a notice that the subject of his evening discourse would be "the Election which is to take place the present week". That was the annual election of State and County officers. The evening discourse seemed much to me like a good N. England political address and taken in connection with the marriage ceremonies hardly seemed like a Sabbath evening. But I suppose Mr. Benton, the minister there is doing a work of reform and feels it necessary to attack wickedness in high places, and he can no where find more corruption than the political parties in California. he is much liked in Sacramento and is getting together a large society. I understood Tully to say that they had already \$14,000 subscribed for building them another church. that would build a pretty nice house at the East and I think it will do so even in California. Mary wished several times that Sarah was with them. the ladies have a sewing circle, the proceeds of which they intend to expend in furnishing their church with carpet & other things. I enjoyed my visit at Sacramento very much. this time much better than before for I was sick when I was there last January. Our town is growing up rapidly. It is now only a little more than three weeks since it was burned and we have now a large number of houses finished and many more nearly so. The larger part of the town will be built up again, and in a much more substantial manner than before. there are now in process of erection 8 large stone buildings which are made fireproof. these are located in different parts of the streets in such a manner that the town would not be likely to be much injured by another fire as it could burn but few

Letter 34

-3-

buildings before coming to one of these fireproof buildings where it would most likely be checked. Dr. Holbrook has an office almost done. we shall probably move into it tomorrow or next day. the office stands on the old ground but is a much better building than the old one, and will render us much better situated for business than before. We have a very nice lot of furniture for our medicines &c in the shape of jars, tincture bottles, gallipots, Scales, weights &c &c. in fact we are going to keep a better variety than we ever kept before.

I now consider my investment pretty safe since I own no buildings and whenever I am ready to leave I can do so without a sacrifice of money invested. I shall be able to send 300 or 400\$ by the next mail and nothing new occurring you may expect a draft by that mail--

You spoke of Oliver's bed in your letter; that I am sorry to say was burned with our house. there were several other memorials which I had of his, but they were all burned. With my loss I am much grieved that I lost my Diploma. that with all my certificates of commendation and many other papers which I valued were burned. Some of my clothes were burned, among which were 2 coats, 1 overcoat, 2 pr pants, 3 or 4 shirts, 2 pr Boots, 2 handkerchiefs, 12 pr Cotton Hose, and many other very usefull and convenient articles. I have since purchased some clothing and am now pretty well supplied. I think I shall not need any great amount now of clothing for a year. And in that time I hope to be nearly ready to leave California. I had thought very strongly of returning next spring, before the fire occurred but I do not expect I can be ready now quite so soon as that time. But as I said in my last I shall not count on quite so extensive a "pile" as I had counted on before the burning of my possessions. We are doing some business every day now and might have done more since the fire had

Letter 34

-3-

we been supplied with medicines. But a doctor is not of much account in a place where he cannot obtain so much as a dose of Salts--So with this I must bid you all good night, with many kisses for my dear little ones, I am,

Your affectionate Husband
John W. H. Baker

Mrs. Julia Ann Baker
Meriden, N. H.