



11-22-1853

Letter from John W. H. Baker to Julia Ann Baker, 1853 Nov. 22

John W. H. Baker

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/grcc>

Recommended Citation

Baker, John W. H., "Letter from John W. H. Baker to Julia Ann Baker, 1853 Nov. 22" (1853). *Gold Rush Life*. 57.

<https://scholarlycommons.pacific.edu/grcc/57>

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Western Americana at Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Gold Rush Life by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact mgibney@pacific.edu.

Letter 9

Mokelumne Hill, Nov. 22, 1853

My Dear Wife

I commence my semi-monthly letter today, it being somewhat dull in business and feeling myself hardly in mood for any thing else I find all my anxiety manifested in my last on account of not receiving my regular letter was owing to your not writing, as I learn upon the receipt of your letter of ^{Sept} Oct. 16th which came to hand Nov. 19th. I can obtain your letters in about one Month from the time of leaving N. Y. as you perceive. I was very glad to learn that the influence of the people was so strong against Dr. Blanchard that they would send to Lebanon rather than employ him. I do not know what it means that it should become so sickly there so soon after my leaving. I am inclined to think it was my fortune not to have sickness there in large amount for I cannot attribute the small amount to my professional skill in the line of prevention. I hope for the sake of the people that there may be a cessation of disease although such a wish might prove detrimental to the Physician. Still he has for his consolation the "hope that if they are sick they will send for him." We have been feeling quite down-hearted today on account of our small amount of business. But upon reckoning we find that we have done \$30, almost all cash and that being the case we shall try and feel content until morning. But to fall from \$80 which we did in one day only two days previously down to the small amt. of \$30 is something of a falling off for California. We are still enjoying the most delightful weather. We had a rainy day some 3 days since and since that time we have had very good travelling and most of the time a good hard road. The climate resembles at the present the New England Indian Summer. We sit in our office with open doors, having a fire 'night and morning to take off the chill. I must acknowledge the receipt of Fred's very interesting

Letter 9

-2-

letters and in pay for them I will enclose in this letter a Gold Dollar to him and one for Laura Maria. I want he should try and be so good a boy that I shall not be obliged to hear that he does not mind his mother and do everything he can to help her. If I hear from him again as a bad boy I shall be obliged to send Sis the present and not anything for him. So he must be a good boy and then I will send him some nice thing again. I am rejoiced to hear that Cousin Oliver is quite contented in regard to his situation and future prospect for I do not want him or anyone else to come to California through my advice. Not that I think he would not do well here but the difficulties and dangers of the voyage and the exposure to the change of climate rendering him liable to disease are things which require deep consideration ere one consents to undergo all these risks.

Nov. ²⁶th. This is thanksgiving day and we have thought of our white thanksgiving wishing we could have been there to enjoy the day with you, but it is otherwise. and instead of meeting my relatives and friends as is customary in New England, I have been engaged instead in my ordinary business of routine practice at the office. I went out and made a visit to a Chilianian who had a knife thrown into his thigh near the knee which presents a bad appearance but will get well in time. After my return I went in to my dinner of which I will give you a list of our different dishes, beef, boiled potatoes, mashed Potatoes, Fried Potatoes, Baked Sweet Potatoes, Roast Beef, Do. Mutton, Stewed Chicken, Boiled Beef, Stewed Tripe, Fried Salmon, Preserved Lobster, Boiled Cabbage, Pickled Beets, Pickled Cucumbers, Preserved Peaches, Pickled Cabbage, Baked Parsnips, Apple Sauce, Boiled Rice, Baked Rice Pudding, Custard, Mince Pie, Apple Pie, 2 kinds of Cake, Indian Bread, Wheat Bread, Tea, Coffee, Water & Wine. Thus you see we had quite a dinner. but you need not think I eat all or near all

these dishes although I had the privilege, but I made my selection of a few and made an excellent dinner. I would like to have known where you and the children spent your thanksgiving. You must write me the history of the day in N. H. I saw the carcass of a Grizzly Bear a few days since which was killed some 16 miles from this place. The man was selling the meat at from 25 to 30 cents a pound. I tasted some of the Broiled Steak at dinner but I did not like it tasted to rancovated of bear. I suppose that in case of necessity a man might relish bear meat quite well -- But when I can obtain something else I think I should not live upon Bear - I made the acquaintance of a man by the name of Cowles (I think that is the name) a few days since who is from Topsham, Vt. Knows Mr. Blanchard's relatives well, the Gillfillan family & all. By the way, how is Mrs. Clough now? I rejoice to hear that Mother remains so comfortable as you represent in your letter and that all the folks at Windsor are well. I think Dennison had better remain where he is for the present as there are hundreds of men here in the same permanent condition that he would be in were he to come who cannot get anything to do and a destitute person in this country is the most unfortunate man in the whole world. If the time ever comes that I can see clear in recommending him to come to this country I will do it. Tell him if he will write me I will answer he letters in any enquiries he may wish to make. If you see Petingal Chellis tell him if he will write me a news letter and finish it up with some leading questions concerning the things he would like to know in this country I will be very glad to answer him. I am fearfull you are taking my absence too hard Julia and dwelling upon it to your detriment, but I wish you to feel as contented as possible and your letters from me I wish you to regard as sure to come to hand (otherwise than by a failure in the post carriage) regularly

Letter 9

-4-

once in two weeks. And on the otherhand I want you should be as careful to send me the same number of letter so that I may as regularly be in receipt of them here. I have plenty of time and would be glad to answer and letters from my N. England friends who would take the trouble to write me. My health is much better than it has been for two years past. We are having as warm weather as you usually have in N. H. in the summer- such weather at this time of the year I never realized and I can assure it is fine. Tell Sarah I am obliged to her for putting her hand to the pen occasionally. Tell Hannah that I have received her Love which she sent in your letter and in return I send her my very kindest regards. Give my regards to Oliver and Jane. Tell Fred that his father will come home when he gets enough "Oro" as that is the Spanish for Gold. I shall not write a long letter this time as I am not in a mood to make a letter very interesting. I shall feel better when I get an answer to my letters that I wrote after I arrived in the Gold Land. When that time comes I will try and write a little more description. In the mean time I subscribe myself your Husband,

John W. H. Baker.

*Written
in upper
margin of p. 1*

