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Letter from John W. H. Baker to Julia Ann Baker, 1854 Jan. 25

John W. H. Baker

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Mokelumne Hill, Jan'y 25th, 1854

My Dear Wife

I write you a few lines today on the account of Dr. Holbrook's leaving tomorrow. I expect him to take this communication with him and the reception of it by you will indicate his arrival in . York. I think he will go to Windsor and Meriden as I have requested him to do so. He will probably make a short stop in the States and will return with his family. Chas. P. Dudley sends for his family by the Dr. and likewise a Mr. Hanson and a man by the name of Leavitt--so that when he returns we shall be likely to have quite an accession to our poor Society. Such an one as I hope will work a reform. I feel myself as though I should like to be the man who was about to start for my family, but when that second sober thought comes I think they are more comfortable there than I could make them here, in fact my means are not equal to the attempt at removing to Cal. at present and if ever such should be the case I might alter my opinion, but I am not quite sure of even that. I am very well not, almost entirely free from my Rheumatism and should enjoy myself quite ~~exceed~~ well if I only had business enough to occupy a little more of my time so that I need not be so constantly reflecting on home and friends. We are having our rainy season now and mud and water are plenty--the rains will fortunately do a great deal of good as it will give the miners an opportunity to wash out their piles of dirt and I hope their piles of gold likewise, for when they are flush with the oro ~~there~~ is the time for me to flourish

I shall write to some of my friends when the season is a little further advanced and I have a little more variety for their entertainment. If Dr. H. comes to Meriden and thinks best to take along my Braithwaite's Retrospects I wish you to see that they are properly packed in a waterproof box. I do not know that I have any

especial thing to send for, but if you think best to fit out a small box of articles in connection with Sophia I presume Dr. H. would have no objection to taking charge of it. I want you to send ~~sent~~ me the miniature of the children. The miniature which we had taken at Windsor is a very poor one as it has become quite bad from spots which have come on different parts of it. In relation to my money affairs I write you more particular in my letter which I have nearly ready to send by mail, the mail leaves here on Friday Morn, and I will finish that to-morrow. I presume you will recieve this letter before you do the regular one by mail as the Dr. will probably go upon the other route. We heard last night from the steamer due one week ago last Saturday, (The Golden Gate). She was wrecked at San Diego. Passengers & Mail &c all saved. this makes the Second Splendid Steamer of the Mail line which has been lost within a few weeks and I am disposed to think the accidents to be the result of carelessness or haste on the part of the Capt. & officers. But like all other things of the nature involving the character of men having heavy responsibilities in california there will no doubt be an endeavor to impress the public that there was no blame resting upon the capt. or officers. it was all the work of fate and could not be prevented. But whiat I rejoyce to hear when such accidents occur is that the lives and fortunes of so many human beings with like feelings perhaps to you and myself are saved from a death by such narrow escapes, I felt almost like crying for joy when I heard that the passengers were all safe. I think my letter, or letters as I hope, will be here to-morrow evening, if so I may delay sending my letter to the office untill eve that I may acknowledge the reciept of the same. The Steamers on this side of the continent leave San Francisco on the 1st & 16th of each montyh

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I desire very much that you should see Dr. H. and have a talk with him as it will seem so much more like fresh news than I can give you. he can give you more of the true character and appearance of things in California than you could realize from a letter. He no doubt will feel rather like enlarging upon the practice of medicine here as he looks so unsatisfactorily at the half-penny business of N. England. I am very well satisfied that it is truly a small thing, but I am on the other hand not satisfied that the good and profitable practice of Medicine is to continue always as good as it is even now in California-- But hoping it will continue long enough to give me a sufficient amt. for comfort and enjoyment, I subscribe myself

Your Husband

Mrs. Julia Ann Baker
Meriden
N. H.

John W. H. Baker