

Letter from JS Baker to youngest son Roland from Santiago de las Vegas, Cuba, where JS and Mary are visiting their second son Charles and his wife Nita. In Charles' biography (JS Memoirs) it states that Charlie was Chief, Cuban Dept of Agriculture, Botany, in 1904 and was in Brazil in 1905, so it is possible, I suppose, that the two couples met for vacation in Cuba in 1907.

February the 15th, 1907 (Roland's 10th birthday)

My dear Roland (10):

I have written to all the rest and now I guess it is your turn.

I went out shopping yesterday with your Mama and Nita in the queer old town near the station. The houses are only one story high, stand very close together and come out to the street, never any yards or gardens in front, all the windows reach from the ground to the top of rooms and are covered with heavy iron bars, no glass - just like our jails only they have heavy iron doors opening inward, which almost always stand open so you can see right in to their houses - see just how they live little naked niggers and all! The streets are just about the width of our dining room and the sidewalks just wide enough for one to walk upon, and as the walks are very bad, we usually walk in the middle of the street, which is often worse: as we passed along the streets we could see the faces of women, girls peeking through the iron bars at us through almost every window - the faces were all shades of brown, from very black to very near white. The women and girls who are pretty near white try to make them selves whiter using lots of powder on their faces. It makes them look "awful funny." There are some of the women who are very pretty and I think they would look ever so much better without this powder.

The store where we went was kept by three Spanish brothers recently from old Spain. They talked only Spanish, were quite dark - black eyes and hair and smiled a good deal, showing very white teeth. The front of the store was all open to the street. When we went in they brought chairs for us to sit down in and they brought their goods to us. Nita talked Spanish with them but of course your Mama could not understand a word. All their goods was made in Spain and they had many fine things.

There was a little five-year-old tot of a girl went with us from the station. Her father is one of the professors here. She is a little "high-fly" - while we were at the store a man passed by with a bunch of those little toy balloons and Nita bought her one and tied the string around her wrist so she would not let it fly off and when we went back home through the streets you ought to have seen the little naked kids run around her and watch that red balloon dancing about over her head.

As soon as we got back we went in to supper (or dinner as it is called here) and Nita untied the balloon from her wrist and tied it to the arm of her little chair at the end of the table, and she could hardly eat for looking at it, but somehow the string got untied and away went the little red balloon off up among the old black timbers thirty feet or more to the rafters, she looked pretty sad for a minute or two for there was no way of getting it down: you see, none of the houses in this country have any ceiling overhead - you see only the rafters and roof boards when you look up.

You see very few birds here excepting those great black vultures or buzzards - they are swirling about everywhere, where there are any bad smells and that is pretty common here: at any time during the day I can look over the city and see lots of buzzards and kites, and I often mistake one for the other - the boys here carry on kind of a kite war - they tie old bits of sharp edged glass to their kite tails, and then try to pull their kites around and onto the other boys' kites so as to cut it o pieces or cut their string: they get awful mad sometimes - but I guess they never fight. I never have seen them, but they do use hair jabs fearfully - swing their arms and shake their fists at each other in a terrible threatening way - but they are very careful not to "hit!"

When we were over at Batibano the other day there was a little white boy playing near where we sat and a small darky came along and threw a chip at him, the white boy grabbed up some

stones and threw them at the darky with all his might and the darky ran away as fast as his little black legs would take him, - the white boy yelling something after him in Spanish; I asked Nita what he said and she said he bawled out at the little nigger, "Go to the insane asylum!" I told Nita if he had been a little American street boy, he would have sent little nigger to a hotter place than that. These people here must be pretty good natured or they could never live so close together without doing some quarreling - if they were Irish or Scandinavians or Americans there would be some fist work and bloody noses sure.

Well, I hope you will all get on good up there; - we will be home before the grass on lawn looks green - it may be before all the snow is gone, can't tell yet how long I will be able to stand it without seeing you all again - I guess your Moma would like to stay longer than I can stand it.

Goodbye,
Papa

(JS Baker's second wife Mary Brown Baker's letters written before, during and after her three week stay at the Battle Creek Sanitarium, Battle Creek, Michigan, January and February, 1909.)

Letter written on Railroad stationery.
Thursday at 9 - 5 AM
My Dear Major,

I've had a fine trip on good trains. Harry (3) went with me to get a ticket and I took the Chicago fast mail train the same one we took, I think. It left at 7:20. We should have arrived in Chicago at 7 AM but the train was 55 minutes late. I only had to wait one half hour at the Michigan Central Depot. The train, The Wolverine, is a fine train - fast. I'll get in to Battle Creek at 12:30. It is not cold. Snows a little. I slept well last night but have had a head ache ever since I started and have eaten scarcely anything. I expect I'll soon recover after I get there. I had a good visit with Minnie Ely, and she went down to see me off. Frank White had boards there and seems to be a good boy. He has improved and grows more manly. His mother wanted her (Minnie) to take him. Where he was before, he was out nights too much but now Minnie says he is hardly ever out. My ticket and berth were only \$13.28 - cheaper than used to be.

I sent the boys some neckties from St. Paul. They must keep them for best and fold them up after wearing them. Florence better mark them so they can tell them apart.

With love to all,
Mary



(Stationery letterhead)
Battle Creek Sanitarium, Open all the Year
Battle Creek Mich., Jan. 8, 1909

My Dear Major,

Am well settled in a comfortable and pleasant room after an easy journey.

Soon after my arrival a nurse came to my room and requested me to call on Dr. Mosher at 4 o'clock (Dr. Mosher is a woman) for a physical examination. They require this if one takes the baths and rubbing and one of the nurses piloted me into the basement where were long rows of little rooms for dressing. I entered one and disrobed putting on a sheet and blanket: then into bathrooms, no, first into a room where I took a douche then into a room where I laid on a cot on my stomach and hot applications were placed on my back then into a warm bath, then rubbed and spotting all over. I felt good after that for a while, then I was wrapped in a sheet and taken to the Doctor's office where she put me through a rigid examination. Sounded my lungs, rolled and pinched my stomach and c. She says my stomach is badly dilated and out of place. The muscles of the abdomen are weak and need strengthening. I must have manual Swedish movement every day, electric and massage treatments. These are all extras and extra charge is made for these treatments. Sunday there is to be a gastric test and my blood will be examined. Then then I suppose she can tell my whole condition. I knew my stomach was not normal but I did not know the difficulty. The doctor makes out my bill of fare for every meal. She wants to try and get some flesh on me - says I am not properly nourished. Of course the diet is very simple and no drink at meals for me.

The mechanical Swedish movements are very queer. I was not strong enough to take but few this morning. It exercises all your muscles. I laid on my back and it felt like something was kneading me all up and down my back. I was quite surprised when the doctor told me I was torn. Tho' I've had bad feelings there occasionally, I laid it to the change of life. It must have been when Florence (8) was born for Dr. Arnold said I was not torn at Winnie's (7) birth. You know I was sick only a short time with Florence and she was large. Doctors ought to be more careful. If he had told me at the time it could have been fixed all right. Very few women but are torn and it is cause of much poor health.

Saturday is kept as their Sabbath. No treatments are given on that day. Doctor Kellog is still performing operations. He sometimes performs between 30 and 40 a day. I should think he'd be too old. One lady said he'd spent so much time learning how to cook, she didn't see how he could know much about surgery.

My expenses will be so high I won't care to stay very long tho' the doctor said I had neglected myself too long. I will know sometime Sunday what she thinks and will let you know. My room is a front one, very pleasant on third floor \$28 a week. It is a very lovely place with every appliance for ones comfort so I suppose that is the cause of the great expense. I must close now and rest. I feel as tho' I'd been put thru' a good deal this pre-noon.

With much love,
Mary

Battle Creek, Mich,
Jan. 9, 1909

My Dear Major,

They are having an eleven o'clock service downstairs in the chapel. I did not go because I did not feel like it, and while I'm here I'm going to do just what I like as far as I can. I did not get up until after seven this morning and had breakfast at eight. Doctor Mosher has just been in, says she thinks it would be a good thing for me to sit several hours on the porch in the fresh air. The nurses bundle one up and put them in wheeled chair and wheel them out and leave them. I did not think I'd like being made to much of an invalid and told her I could walk. She said I could not walk for two or three hours, and I'd have a good time out there with the others. I have a cold tight bandage put on me every night and it does make me feel comfortable. I slept well last night.

I took a walk in the Palm Garden after breakfast. There are good sized trees in it including banana trees which bear fruit, but have none on now.

Yesterday afternoon I was surprised by a telephone message from Ray (1, At this time, freelance writer and author of David Grayson books. One of the founders of American Magazine). He said Aunt Helen was not expected to live. He and Jessie (Ray's wife) are coming to see me tomorrow PM or next Wednesday.

The matrons, nurses and maids are exceedingly kind and pleasant.

You don't need to send any reading matter (anyway at present) for I shan't have much time for it. If I stay two or three hours out of doors, I can't read there.

People have no business having a golden wedding. No one knows what to give. Probably several will chip in together and give something. They are not particular friends of mine.

I think the cooking here is delicious and I mean to learn some of the recipes. Just now it takes all my time keeping track of my treatments and finding my way to the different departments.

Those who have been here some time say it takes about a week to get used to it. If I was strong, I'd learn to swim. It must be real fun. They seem to enjoy it so much. I took one massage treatment. I enjoyed that and think it will do me lots of good. I am anxious to hear from Fannie (Harry's third wife). Hope you are all well.

Love to all,
Mary

Battle Creek, Mich.
Jan. 11, 1909

My Dear Major,

I've had two letters from you and it seemed so good to hear from home. The one written on the 8th came Sunday night but I did not get it until this morning. I'll expect another on the five

o'clock. Ray and Fred (James Frederic, 6, went by Fred. Married Bessie Buskirk in Wayland, MI, in 1907. Professor of Forestry, Michigan Agricultural College, E. Lansing at this time) came yesterday about 4 o'clock and took supper here and left on the 8 o'clock train. It did me lots of good to see them - Aunt Helen seemed a little better but is very low. A gentleman showed the boys through the men's department for medical treatment and they said it was quite interesting. There are 300 patients here. As you said I will learn a great deal.

There are some pleasant ladies at my table. One real fat jolly one has gone to bed to stay a week and have scarcely anything to eat. Last night when we were down to have our bandages on I met her and she said, "Just think of me living on that when I love to eat so well." I miss her at table. She could not keep her food in her stomach.

My doctor said my womb was out of place and tipped back. She put it back in place today. She said it went back easily but it hurt me most dreadfully. Now I am wearing an abdominal support - which makes me much more comfortable. Now I can stand up straight without feeling that I am coming to pieces. She says a great many women have the same trouble. One reason is because they do not dress properly. I've got to have my clothes hang from my shoulders. This is hard to dress that way and look good. But I guess comfort will have to come first in my case at my age.

I am going to move into a cheaper room tomorrow morning: just as good only on 4th floor and a little smaller. It will be \$26.

Ray and Fred want me to visit them before going home so perhaps I will - it is so short a ride. I'm going to hear Dr. Kellogg lecture this evening. Ray thinks you had better come and go home with me. I'm glad Stan's (9) eye is all right.

Tuesday morning.

Heard Dr. Kellogg lecture last night. He does not look to be more than 55 or 60 years old - is vigorous. His lecture was very interesting and entertaining. There is a question box and he answers those - more later.

With lots of love to all,

Mary

P.S.. Please send the "American."

Battle Creek, Mich.

Jan. 14, 1909

My Dear Husband,

I did not get any letter from home today. Maybe one will come on the five o'clock. I am anxious to hear from Fannie.

I felt better yesterday than any day since I came and am quite encouraged. I haven't had any too hard rubbing. They see that I am frail and don't rub hard. The doctor gave me two treatments, put my womb back in place and massaged the muscles. Replacing the womb is painful if it can be made to stay back will be better for me, as it presses against the bowels and causes constipation. Most of the troubles are caused by restrictions around the waist causing a downward pressure. I'm going to get some patterns for union suits where everything can be supported from the hips. I'll have some made for myself and make some for the girls if they can be induced to go without corsets. My doctor says she never had corsets on but one day and that was enough for her. She seems to be a good doctor. One woman told me she was going home for the doctor told her there was nothing the matter with her, and she seemed quite indignant. I know that I don't have any imaginary ailments for I've always tried to fight off my bad feelings. I don't have any desire to be an invalid.

I don't think you did anything out of the way in writing to Nita (wife of Charles (2)). She ought to know how others see her. She don't see herself as others see her. Ray says Edith sent her \$170. I should think Nita would call on her own mother for aid if she called on anyone. The fact is she don't ask Charlie for money and Ray says he don't give her any. They ought to have a compromise. I hope they will.

I am learning lots of things here that will help me take care of my family. I want them to be healthy and I firmly believe in Doctor Kellogg's methods. Doctor Kellogg must be a very good man for he does not have any pay for his practice and he performs many and very successful operations. His income is all derived from the sale of health foods. He is going to build a fine sanitarium at Atlantic City. He has a million dollars endowment fund on hand now. That would be a delightful place to have one.

There is a little lady here from Boston that I've taken quite a fancy to. There are two from the hospital ward whom I like ever so much. There are between four and five hundred now. I must dress for supper. Have been lounging and sleeping.

Good night my dear,
Mary

Battle Creek, Mich.
Jan. 16, 1909

My Dear Major,

Your letter written on the 13th came this morning. It takes longer for mail to reach here than I thought it would. I failed to get any letter written yesterday because I had a caller at the time I was going to write. Then later on my way back from supper I stopped to see my next door neighbor who did not go to supper. I thought she might be sick. She is the lady from Boston. I stayed there until I was tired so went right to bed on my return. I must tell you about my caller. Night before last just before supper I stepped down into the great parlor and went over and looked at the grand piano, then seeing a grey haired lady sitting there, walked over to her and opened a conversation. She told me her whereabouts and all her ailments, then I got up to go when she asked me where I was from. I told her and she said come back and sit down, "Do you know a Major Baker there?" I told her I was his wife. Then she said she was one of Helen Baker's (Byron's wife. Byron was JS's brother) friends and she knew Byron and you well. Her name is Nell Simonds. I told her of Helen's illness which she had not heard, so she called yesterday. I had a letter from Bessie and she said Aunt Helen might pull through she was so much better. I was glad to be able to tell Miss Simonds the good news.

I had four letters this morning from Fleta (wife of Hugh, 5, Professor of Forestry, Penn State College at this time). Mrs Lisa Thompson and you and was very much surprised to get one from Nita - strange she should write to me. It is only written from policy so I shall not reply I don't think. If I do I will tell her what I think of her course and perhaps that is not best.

This is the sabbath. I am an Adventist while I am here only I have not yet attended the meetings. "When in Rome, do as the Romans do" so I'll do nothing today but write letters and read. The "American" came and I bought a copy of Everybody's Magazine so I'll get thru' the day.

The musical at our house will be all right. Florence is capable of running most anything. I'm glad I'm not there. Such things tire me so.

There was quite a fall of snow last night and it still snows. Yesterday I was out for two hours on the porch and at the last a nurse gave us breathing exercises.

The plain smooth paper is what I want. I don't like the heavy as well and I like what you wrote your last letter on. You don't need to send it here tho'. This will do well enough while I'm here.

They charge enough to furnish me with paper. They send in their bill on Mondays. I think there is enough to pay for this week but will have to have more before another week closes. You and better send \$50. Can send it from my money at the office. I wish you'd send me one of your good pictures (photo).

I am delighted to hear of Fannie's good fortune. What is her address? I must write to her. It seems good to be real lazy. If a rest well do me good this certainly will. I am waiting to see Dr. Kellogg before I decide about staying. Dr. Mosher said I ought to stay at least a month. I am glad to escape some of that terrible cold weather.

Love to all the family including Ella,
Your loving wife.

Jan. 16 1909
Letter no. 2

To All My Dear Ones,

I'll write another letter today because I won't have much time tomorrow. It won't go until I get some more stamps but possible you'll get this same time Papa gets the other one. I mailed one to him this morning.

I've just returned from chapel services The chapel seats between 3 and 400 people. It was well filled. There is a fine pipe organ in front back of the choir. A young looking boy plays it but the music is very good. A Methodist Bishop preached.

There are two Mexican boys here and one little cute looking Mexican girl. She is one of the nurses to give baths. It seems both the boys are in love with her. I thought she was a little Jap girl until told otherwise.

It is snowing quite hard.

I did not know as I'd get outdoors today but a nurse came and took me out where there was a whole row of mummies just like me. I don't suppose we could sit out that long at home without getting cold. They keep the rooms very warm here and that just suits me as I can open the windows and have fresh air all night long.

I suppose Harry (3, Cushing Land Agency, St. Croix Falls, WI) and Fannie are very happy over the little girl (Harriet).

Florence must write and tell me all about the Musicals

I'll enclose a letter I had from Charlie (2).

I'd like to see you all tonight. You don't know how much I love you.

Mama

Battle Creek, Mich.
Sunday PM, Jan. 17, 2009

My Dear Major,

I just received your letter mailed on the 14th. It is strange where my letters all go to. I have written you nearly every day since I came and when I did not write to you, I wrote to the children. So I've written home every day. I have received all your letters, I guess, one every day except one day. I could not stay here unless I heard every day from home. It is good of you to write so often. I was so glad to hear that Fannie is getting on so well. I suppose she'll soon be at home and their baby will be the finest ever yet.

I was very much surprised to get a letter from Nita. She tried to make up to you first. Now she is

trying it on me. It don't make an impression. It makes me mad too to have her going around to his relatives and complaining, Why don't she go to her mother, as you say, complain to her own people if she does to anyone. I never knew anyone with so little common sense.

I was surprised with a letter from Mrs. Peck a very nice friendly letter which I shall answer soon. I've written more letters since coming here than ever in my life is so short a time. I got the "American" and bought Everybody's Magazine so I had enough to read yesterday. I think the rest here will do me lots of good if nothing else does.

Afternoon:

I have just come in from my wheel chair trip (Don't that sound lazy?) Was two hours on the porch and feel so much better for it. This is a perfectly lovely day bright sunshine and mild. At home we would think it was spring like.

After supper:

Jessie and Stannard (likely Ray and Jessie's son James standard, born 1899) have been here and took supper with me. I was very glad to have them here. I took Jessie down in the woman's department and after supper we went into the gymnasiums and saw them march. It is quite interesting to those who have not seen it.

I have written this letter piece meal, so it is not into today's mail. I don't know whether it will go now before tomorrow afternoon or not.

Your loving wife,
Mary

Battle Creek, Mich.

Jan. 18, Monday eve., 1909

My Dear Husband,

Just got your card this noon. I wonder where my letters have gone to. I've written home every day. They must be delayed somewhere.

I had such a nice visit with Jessie yesterday. She came about 4 o'clock and left at 7:30. This has been a beautiful day 22 above zero.

I hope you got my letter asking for money for I must have some more before I can pay my bill for this week. I hope there is plenty of my money in the office. I can use that.

I met Miss Simonds again tonight and she wants me to come down in the parlor to hear Dr. Kellogg's lecture. I like to go only he begins rather late and I get tired before he stops and have to leave, but there are lots that do that. Dr. Mosher wants me to see Doctor Kellogg so I suppose I'll see him tomorrow. Everyone who has been here any length of time seems to have great confidence in Dr. Kellogg.

Tuesday morning.

Miss Simonds wanted me to go and hear Dr. Kellogg again last night so I went. I did not stay until he was there for he talked so long or rather he did not begin early enough - so I left at 9 o'clock. They have good orchestral music before the talk.

Must close and mail this.

Love to all,
Mary

Battle Creek, Mich.

Jan. 20, 1909

My Dear Major,

Was glad as always to get your letter. Your picture did not come but may get it tomorrow. Miss Simonds is quite interesting. She is quite a student of human nature. She seems to know a good many people around here. She came in to see me last night. While she was here I was called down to see Doctor Kellogg. He put my uterus back in place very easily - did not hurt at all. He knows how. He put something in to hold it in place, said he'd "see me" again in a day or two and some day he'd give me some laughing gas and take a tuck in the ligament. He won't get a chance to do that on me, I don't think. What do you think about it? I would be more comfortable now if it were back in place, but it won't be many years before it shrivels up. Then it won't matter where it is. Now it presses against the rectum, but if I am careful of my diet and don't stand much on my feet, Dr. Mosher says I can get along. Dr. Kellogg wouldn't fix it anyway until the muscles of my abdomen are stronger. I begin to feel stronger there owing to these treatments. I think if Ella is willing to stay there, I might stay a couple of weeks longer away. I might leave here a week from Friday, spend a few days in Lansing, then home, but I'll see. It would do me lots of good to take these treatments a little longer. Must get ready for supper.

Lots of love,
Mary

Battle Creek, Mich.
Jan. 21, 2009

My Dear Major,

I received your photo this morning also your letter mailed on the 19th. I wish you'd send me the story of your history that you have just finished. I got the check for \$50.

Miss Simonds says her brother Bob died two years ago without any warning. Miss Simonds must have been quite pretty when a girl. She is good looking now, refined and bright - real vivacious.

When one takes these baths it makes the hair get out of curl and look rather straggly. Yesterday she came in with her hair all curled and a becoming hat on and she looked real pretty. She said she had stayed at home and rested and did not take her treatments, so she had time to curl her hair. She rooms outside, but comes here for some of her exercises and comes every night to attend lectures and entertainments.

I don't feel like sitting up and taking in all these things. I am here for treatment and the rules are to be in bed by nine and up at six. A nurse comes at 15 minutes to seven (for I don't walk before breakfast) and gives me a cold friction bath - at half past 8 at night or a little later I go down to nurses department and get a cold wet bandage put on. It feels good. I can do that after I get home and my doctor says I must keep up the cold morning baths if I can. I know it is good.

There won't be much if any more than enough money to pay my next Monday's bill. I have a cheap room but there are so many extras. I think if I stay until a week from today (that will be three weeks in all) it will do, tho' the doctor thinks I ought to stay longer.

I want to get some of these breakfast foods to send home. They send them free of express or freight if it is not more than \$5 worth. They have delicious crackers that they call gruose biscuit. I had a good letter from Mrs. Vanbergen - will enclose it. I'd like to have Florence and Winnie visit there. They'd have such a good time.

There is a missionary conversation here. I think I'll step in and hear one of the parlor lectures this evening. Miss Simonds said she'd save a chair for me. It commences at 6:30 so won't last late. Dr. Kellogg lectures later this same evening, but I don't care to stay so late tho' he is interesting. There is a woman rooming near me whom I met at our table who is simply delightful.

We have become quite good friends. She has seen trouble and views the brigade of mummies on the porch and tho' she has never had any children she has a fine unselfish character. She told me she had been married twice. Her first husband died very suddenly before she could get to him and they were devoted to each other. The tears came to her eyes when she took me. In three years she married again (after she had 3 operations). He is a good man and said he married her to take care of her. She says she loves him too with every fiber of her being. She has poor health tho' she looks well, is large and fleshy. She has such a sweet smile and pleasing ways that everyone likes her. I hope she'll get well. We meet all kinds of people in such a place. Most of them are refined and nice. All that I have met are. It is a great place to study human nature. There is only one man whom I have spoken to except the officials. He is a middle aged man, jolly looking who comes out (the next page of the letter is missing)

Battle Creek, Mich.
Jan. 23, 1909

My Dear Major,

Received two letters from you this noon, one from Fannie, and one from Winnie Ely, so I was made very happy.

We had a big thunder storm night before last here, but never dreamed that you could have one there. It was very warm here yesterday and the birds were singing as tho' it were spring, but today is colder and very windy. A bad day to be out - just like a March day.

I want to leave here next Friday probably afternoon train. I will have been here just three weeks. You had better send me the rest of my money and enough more to make up \$50 so I'll have plenty to get home on. I'm going to get some massage cream and a few other things I'll need at home. They have the best of such things here. I am feeling so much better that I know these treatments have done me good and I want to keep some of them up, those that I can do myself or teach Florence to do.

I'm glad the boys have a bowling alley. It is a harmless amusement. It is funny about that muskrat. He must like being fed. I think he'll be a better pet than the old cat and less trouble. I feel I ought to invite Miss Simonds to eat a meal with me. She comes in to see me and she has to eat at a restaurant or alone in her room, so I'll invite her to a meal before I go. I have to pay fifty cents a meal for every visitor I have. Everything here counts up, and there are lots of extras. I am glad to be in this fine building this time but if I came again and was able to walk, I would get a room outside and take treatments at one of the other halls the way Miss Simonds is doing. This institution is very benevolent in a way those who can't afford to pay for treatments get them free if they have been teachers or ministers. Miss Simonds said she was supposed to tell anyone, but she gets hers free of charge because she has been a teacher and has little means. They entertain ministers, missionaries and such free of charge and only charge half price for rooms.

You know Carrie Chamberlain (Cousin on Mary's side) can give these kinds of treatments. I believe, if she set up an establishment in St. Croix she'd get enough to do. There are lots of women there who would take regular treatments. When you get another building fever, you might build her a house for that purpose.

I will close now and get this into the mail. I must buy some stamps. Could not get any yesterday. Today seems like Monday.

Love to all,
Mary

Battle Creek, Mich.
Jan. 25, 1909

My Dear Major,

Your letter yesterday received this morning, and I hasten to answer. I intended telling you to write the Goodwins. I think I'll be home by that time but it won't make my difference if Ella stays. If my check comes so I can pay all up here, I'll go Friday to Lansing. I promised to stay with Fred and Bessie for I was at Ray's before. This is a glorious morning about like our fall weather at home. I went out on the balcony before breakfast and took quite a walk between the balcony at one end and the other at the other end.

I had a letter from Stan (son) this morning. It seems he did not get my last letter. He expresses herself very well. Who knows, maybe he can be a journalist someday.

I invited Miss Simonds to tea night before last. She is a great talker and I'm beginning to get a little tired of it tho' I like her. She is kind hearted and good.

I must close this and get ready for treatments.

Lovingly yours,
Mary

Battle Creek, Mich.
Jan. 26, 1909

My Dear Major,

I saw Dr. Kellogg and he wanted to have an operation right off today and insisted on telegraphing you. I don't know but he would in spite of us if Dr. Mosher had not stopped him. She came up to see me and said she wanted me satisfied. I told her he might write if he chose but not to telegraph. I'm going to Lansing anyway. I'm not going to stay here any longer. I am homesick and the thought of staying as much longer again is more than I can stand just now. If I get money today, will start tomorrow.

Must hurry and mail this.

Mary

Lansing, Mich.
Jan. 1909

My Dear Major,

Here I am at Jessie's. I wanted to get away from the sanitarium as quickly as possible. I did not know if I stayed but Dr. Kellogg would perform an operation in spite of me, and I was sick of the place anyway. Miss Simonds appropriated me as her particular property and made me nervous. She is kind hearted but is rather officious and such a talker. She is very tiresome. I got your letter at noon Thursday, packed my trunk, telephoned to Jessie for Bessie is in Wayland, and came right on. Bessie will probably be back tomorrow. I got here at 9 o'clock last night. Luther (Fred and Bessie's son (?)) met me and brought me here. He is nice I like him.

Today the ground is covered with 8 or 10 inches of snow and it still comes down. Fred is not here, well be back next week. Aunt Helen is about the same. Lu thinks she can't get well.

Helen will probably be here for Sunday.

I have just had a good nap. Jessie's dinner tasted very good. Maybe I'll gain more here than at Battle Creek.

Will close so as to get this off.

Love to all the kids. Lots of love to my dear husband.

Mary

P.S.

The latest is that Nita is learning manicuring at Los Angeles.

I had my hair dressed before leaving Battle Creek and Jessie said it is perfectly beautiful. I wore a veil over my head last night so as not to mess it.

Lansing, Michigan

Feb. 3, 1909

My Dear,

Jessie thinks Ray will be at home Friday and so I've decided to stay until Saturday morning. I think Winnie will meet me in St. Paul Sunday and I'll be home Monday night. If there is any need of my coming right away, telegraph and I'll start right off. If any one is sick or anything else the matter, Mona (Mira ?) has invited us all there for tea. I saw Aunt Helen yesterday. She looks quite bright. Has been sitting up some. Jessie and I went to call on Mrs. Gower (Harry's first wife, Helen Gower, died in 1900 at age 27. Perhaps this is her mother who could still be alive and approximately 60 years old) yesterday. P. M. She had called on me and we were not there. Jessie and I walked by the place where you had your foundry and saw where we thought you had your room, the one you furnished yourself.

I want to see Ray if it were not for that, would start home tomorrow morning. He may come home tomorrow for Jessie wrote him I was here.

The weather is warm again and probably the snow will soon melt away.

I am feeling very well and think I'll be ready to go to work as soon as I get home.

I hope Roland (son) is well and don't cough mightily. He is not so rugged as the rest and I believe I'll have to take him in hand and doctor him up. Be sure and have the cows turned out when it is not too cold. Some farmers turn them out every day even if it is cold and I believe it is better to do so. I am anxious to get home but two days longer probably won't make much difference.

With love to all,

Mary

(Apparently Mary made a trip to California alone to visit relatives.)

Clairemont, California

February 13, 1910

My Dear Roland,

I have two letters of yours to answer. You have been very good to write to me. I am glad you have such good times sliding. We don't see any snow here except on top of the mountains. I went to Riverside last Monday and stayed there until yesterday. Mr. Kyle said I could pick all the oranges I wanted. I sat in a hammock under the trees where I could reach up and pick them if I chose. I like to peel them and eat them like an apple if I am outdoors so juice won't get all over everything. Mr. Kyle had the finest oranges I ever ate, so sweet and juicy. I would have been very happy if you could have been there to eat all you wanted. You would have enjoyed climbing the mountain. You could have climbed it easily. I had to ride up most of the way. We, Mrs. Chubb and I, got out and climbed a little ways.

I guess it will be just as well for you and Stan to run the vegetable garden. The popcorn project would have been a little too hard when you are going to school. It was very warm yesterday. We had a picnic at Riverside in the park. I had on my winter underwear and nearly melted. I took the train right after our picnic dinner and got back here about four o'clock. Winnie met me at the station. I did not hear them call Clairemont at all and came near not getting off. Wouldn't it have been a joke if I went on clear to Los Angeles? I would have been provoked enough. If Papa was here I expect he'd be riding all over on horse back. We have an invitation to ride in an auto this PM. I hope he is a careful driver. It is one of Charlie's students.

I wish I could have some of the butter Ella makes. Did you celebrate Lincoln's birthday? I must go and get ready for dinner.

With a bushel of love,
Mama

My Dear Boy,

I just remembered that Tuesday is your birthday and you will be 13 years old. I hope you will have a happy day. I would like to send you something but can't it is so far. I will give you some money to put with what you have for a bicycle when I get home.

Mama

1925 Gough St.
San Francisco
Saturday, March 5, 1910

My Dear Roland,

I just got back from a long auto ride. We went on the great big ferry and rode across the bay just as we did two days ago, but we went farther, way on to San Jose. We saw some beautiful country, great rolling, green hills, portions of them under cultivation.. We passed through many great orchards of cherry and peach trees all in bloom. The air was laden with their perfume. We started from here about 10 o'clock this morning, arrived at San Jose at 12:30, a distance of about 50 miles. We took dinner at the Hotel then started back around by the mainland on the peninsula. Altogether, we went about 125 miles. We got home at 15 minutes to 6. Part of the time went at the rate of 40 miles an hour. We came through Golden Gate Park on the way back and saw a herd of Buffalo.

When we were on the Ferry, day before yesterday, I saw a seal swimming. There are lots of sea gulls flying all around the boats. It is fun to watch them. We went to Leland Stanford University. There are lots of ruins left there from the earth quake.

Marie and Mable have a white angora or Persian cat. It is very pretty. These cats are totally deaf.

Is your snow house still there?

We got out and picked violets on the way home yesterday. Doesn't that seem queer to you? I did not hear from home yesterday or today and am somewhat homesick. Harriet must be cute now. I hope none of you will get the scarlet fever. If you do you must let me know. Has school commenced again?

The day we went to Pasadena we saw the cutest little China boy riding a bicycle ahead of us in the road. Mr. Metz blew his horn so he'd get out which he did in such a hurry that his wheel tumbled over and he fell off. He looked just like those little Chinese dolls with straight black hair.

You did pretty well to sleep with the window open at 30 degrees. This house is steam heated but has kettle bits of radiators. The ocean breeze blows into our window every night. I must close and write a letter to Papa.

With much love,
Mama

(Florence went to Michigan in the summer of 1910. Lansing and Coldwater are mentioned. Clarence Dwight Baker, 4, teacher, author, married Carolyn Chubb in Coldwater, MI, in June of 1906. Clarence died in December, 1906, at age 30. Their daughter, Mary Dwight, was born in May of 1907. Carolyn married Edward Sutton in June of 1910. Carolyn's second husband died in 1915 at the age of 40. She married a third time to John Todd who was 27 years her senior - born in 1854, died in 1956 at 102. Carolyn died in 1976 at age 95.)

(Letter written by JS Baker)
Tuesday, June 28, 1910
Hungerford Cottage, Deer Lake

My Dear Florence,

I had a strenuous day of it yesterday. I rode over fifty miles over wrecked country roads, - just back to town about 6 in evening, hungry and sleepy. I just surrounded a couple of bananas and turned in. I slept 10 solid hours, got up at five, took a bath, went down to Mrs. ____ got a good square breakfast and felt "gay as a lark."

I got out here about 9 A.M. I found a lot of mail awaiting me and yours of Saturday among the rest.

You will have received before this my second letter which will give you my latest plans.

Ray wrote as if it was all arranged that Carolyn was to go up to Lansing with you, so I would have no inducement to go to Coldwater, and, as I told you in my last, I decided to go straight through to Lansing and meet you and Carolyn and little Mary could come on up to Lansing where you "got a good ready." But a day or two later (after writing my last to you) I got a letter from Bessie in which she said she was just writing Carolyn and inviting her up there - and it occurred to me that it is possible that Carolyn cannot go with you to Lansing, - I am sure she will go with you if she can, but if it is impossible for her to go with you, you will have to go up alone - in which event you will write or wire Ray what day, and by what road and by what train you will reach Lansing, and he or some of them will meet you at the station: I however feel quite certain that Carolyn will go up with you and shall depend upon seeing her there.

I found a letter here this morning here this morning from her - She was going up to Ann Arbor to stay until the 30th of June, Thursday. You better arrange to go down to Coldwater about July 1st or 2nd and then you and Carolyn can fix your own date for coming up to Lansing.

I will leave here on Wednesday morning reaching Lansing if nothing happens on the afternoon of July 7th (Thursday). I will direct this letter to Oak Park and I think it will reach you before you leave there, all right.

I left here for town on Saturday P.M. It had been a peaceful hot afternoon, but the clouds were gathering in the west when I started out and they grew thicker and blacker on the way in and just as I got to the old place the storm burst - water came down in buckets full - the lightnings flashed and the thunder crashed and i was so happy that I felt like dancing a jig. I didn't get back here until this morning so I know what effect the storm had on things here, when Old dent (?) wasn't around to see to things and put everything "ship shape" before the storm struck. So when I got here this morning they had "wild-eyed" tales to tell me of the "times they had." Got things in off

the porch, tying up the curtains and keep things from getting soaked. But the most dramatic incident they had to tell was how the lightning struck a big oak tree on the hillside about 200 yards south west of the cottage throwing enormous slivers of oak far out into the lake and all over the hillside - one great piece fell directly in the drive - way up over the hill and must be removed before a carriage can pass. They all tried to tell me at once by writing, gesticulations, and wild-eyed expressions what an awful crash it made. Roland was down at the lake and he said he saw it strike, and huge pieces of oak fly hundreds of feet high through the air. I asked Rol if he came up to the house after the show was over, and he said, "You bet I did." The boys insisted on my going up on the hillside and examining the wrecked oak and the immense pieces scattered about. I don't think I ever saw such force manifested by lightning before. It was as if an enormous charge of dynamite had exploded inside the oak. But the storm has had a magic effect: It is cooler, no dust now and everything is fresh and green. Stan's garden is fine. He thinks he can see the corn grow by squinting across the top wire of the fence:
I will expect to see you soon and will write no more now - I did not expect to write more than a dozen lines when I commenced this, but when I commence to write a letter, I never know when to stop.

Goodbye until we meet,
Father

July 7, 1910 (Written on Hungerford Cottage stationery)

My Dear Major,

I suppose you and Florence are whirling away toward Lansing. I hope it rained some there and it is more comfortable on that account. We need rain so badly. It is very warm now on the porch but last night I had to put on a big comfortable blanket toward morning to keep from freezing. The boys are in town working hard on their job. It is lonesome without them. We all sleep on the porch and I think Minnie and Reva are enjoying themselves. Minnie and I are going after the mail today. Of course we won't hear from you until tomorrow.

I have a lame neck and shoulders and don't feel very scrumptious today. I think I took cold in that low necked apron I put on when it was so warm in town. They seem to take it upon themselves at the office to send your mail, so as you'll get it sooner you won't care. Fannie is going to spend a few days in Minneapolis with the baby. I hope you'll write often. I shall be anxious to hear about everything and everybody.

Your loving wife,
Mary

My Dear Florence,

Aunt Minnie and I just went for the mail and I got a nice long letter from you, but was not there in time to get this off, so thought I'd write a few lines to you.

I shall be anxious to know if you and Papa met all right. Stan got a postal from John (probably Harry's son by his first marriage) telling of the day spent in St. Paul.

What a nice time you are having seeing so much. It does seem as though you had been gone a long time. We will go after the mail early tomorrow so as to mail forward some letters to Papa. Your father's mail did not come out yesterday, so I thought they forwarded it, but it came out today. It is most four o'clock so you are probably nearing Lansing.

Little Ruth is a dear little girl and so imaginative. It is fun to hear her talk and pretend. Aunt Minnie was telling how you used to keep house under the desk at their house.

I'm wondering what you are making. You were very sensible to invest in music. You are quite unworldly. You could have had another letter if it had not gone to Coldwater.. I sent a note to Papa and suppose you have that.

Lots of love from Mama

July 10, 1910 (Written on Hungerford Cottage stationery)

My Dear Major,

Your postals came and we were glad to hear of your pleasant journey and safe arrival. It was nice to be met by so many friends and in such a fine conveyance. I suppose Florence will have the time of her life.

Wednesday morning we came out here (Deer Lake cottage) and that evening the boys drove into town and stayed until Friday evening. Miles gave away a lot of potatoes so not very many were wasted.

We had a fine rain yesterday. It came down gently. Today we had a slight shower. Minnie and I went for the mail in our raincoats and rubbers. The lake is just like a mirror tonight and the two boys have taken Reva and Ruth to the outlet for a ride.

Last night right after supper Reva and Roland went fishing and caught five nice bass and we had them for dinner. As we could not get any chickens, they came in handy.

I let St. Cecelia go home last night to rest my nerves. She is the best natured being I ever saw. She'll wash tomorrow, and iron next day. That will keep her occupied for two days or more.

I hope you will come around by the Lakes. I'm sure you will both enjoy it.

Give my love to Ray and family and Fred and Bessie. I suppose you are seeing all the relatives.

Good night with much love,
Mary

(Letter written by JS Baker)

St. Croix Falls, Wis.

December 19th, 1910

My Very Dear Carolyn,

I have just received yours of the 18th. I cannot tell you how much your letter interests me. At the time of your writing you evidently had not received my last letter. Mary and I were busy this afternoon doing up and marking the package for you and just as we finished your letter came. I read it and gave it to her to read: She will write you by and by if she has not already done so. Our Christmas package didn't contain much - only two articles for you and one for Mary: I couldn't think

of anything else to send little Mary so I got the little dress patterns - I hope you will not think it unsuitable.

We are not sending out as many or as nice presents this year as usual: Mary has been making a great many things for her friends, she has been sewing for weeks on her Christmas presents: and she has been so interested in it that I could not induce her to leave it to ride out with me on pleasant days - she says she takes great pleasure in doing nice fancy work to give to her friends. I think she does, she is evidently the happiest when she is doing and striving to make others happy: and I would not be surprised if she got more real happiness in making her presents than some of her friends experience in receiving them.

I expect Florence home on Thursday of this week. Things will be lively here in the old place as

soon as she gets here. There are some presents here for her now, and I know that lots more will come - she always has more presents than any other member of the family - she has such a host of friends - She is very popular down there at College (Carlton).

Roland has not grown very much since last year, but Stan has run right up almost to his full height. He will be the tallest one of the whole family. He begins to go with the girls some time, therefore is getting quite particular about his personal appearance.

We are having beautiful weather here, the skating is fine and the boys and girls and some older ones too, have been improving it for all its worth. There is very little or no snow. It is not very cold and the days are brilliant with sunshine and the nights moonlit.

I cannot write much more this eve.

Give my love and some kisses to the dear little girl, and as for yourself, you have my love beyond words to express. I wish you and Mary and the doctor all a Merry Christmas.

As ever your loving
Father

