

Lowell, Mass. Sunday July 14, 1844

Distant Parents,

It is with pleasure that I seat myself this morning to write to you to let you know of my health, which is very good at present. Having a few leisure hours, I use them to improve my writing. I'm sending you this letter by Mrs. Walker. I don't know if I can write half a letter, but I will write what I can.

Louisa talked of going home with Mrs. Walker. But, in her last letter Louisa said that if Mrs. Walter did not leave in the next day she would not go. What she has heard I do not know. I like it in the mill, but my overseer is not the best, or I might say, the cleverest. I do not make much money. I made only six dollars and a quarter last month, on top of what I pay for living expenses. I pay five dollars a month for my room and food. You may think it strange that I have changed my boarding place again. I will tell you a few of the reasons why I have changed places so much. The first place I went to was owned by the Corporation. It was a very good place indeed. They kept about thirty boarders all the time. Six women slept in one room. Else had some trouble with two girls she roomed with and she would not stay. We went to the second place together. The boardinghouse keeper was cross, lazy and nasty. She would build up a fire just before she went to bed, put on her coffee and let it steep all night. In the morning, she would get up, build up a fire and go to bed again. We would get up, get our breakfast and go into the mill (that was when we went in before breakfast).¹ When we came out for dinner² we would have what coffee was left from the morning. We would have a little dry bread, a cracker or two apiece and that was our dinner. We would have a piece of pie once a week and that was our living for about three months. I was sick there. With that type of food, I am sure you can understand why. I left there about a week after I went back to work. I now board with Mr. and Mrs. Elston on Central Street. They are great folks. Judith, Else and I are all live there. I have as much food as I want and just when I want it. That is all I have to say about my boarding places.

I am as happy as ever. I was glad to see the girls and Dana. The girls were very lucky to get into the mill so soon. They went in the next Monday after they got here. They will make more money than I do after they learn their job, though their work will be harder. They say they get tired once in a while. They are well, and they say as happy as the rest of us. Mary and Climena work on as dressers and Else as a warper. They live about a mile and a half from me. I go over and see them as often as I can, and that is not very often. They have been over to see me twice since they have been here. Judith talked of going home in August but she has about given it up on going until October on the account of John. He has been very sick. His wife broke her wrist and about the time that got well, he was started bleeding at the lungs. He was very sick. He was not allowed to speak. He had to lie on his back all the time and no one was allowed to speak to him. The doctor said if he had not so strong he never would have got over it. And, the doctor says if John gets sick again he doesn't think John will live through it. John got sick again a day or two ago and we are all worried. Though the doctor says if he is very careful he may get over it again, but he doubts it. I will leave this and write something else.

Ann Graham, if you know her, had her hand torn off. It happened in the carding room. I heard she had it taken off above her elbow. We don't know but she will lose her life because of it. Susan Bacon is here and a lot more people that I know. Susan sent for me to come over and see her but I have not been. I have received two letters from you since I left home. The first I got about two months after it was written.

The second in about ten days. Write to me as soon as you can. Write whether father has paid Uncle Elwin or not, for I should like to know. If mother would like to have me buy her anything and send her, I will. Or, I will buy her something and bring her when I come. I think likely I shall have more money then. I should like to have her write what she would like to have me get her. However, if I stay in Lowell until spring I doubt if you will ever see me again. If my health is as good as it is now, I am thinking of joining the association and going to the west next spring. I bought three dresses within two months. Two of them cost me three dollars apiece. Six yards and 1/2 in the back, double width. Ten yards in the other, single width. I have a large cape like them both. I'll send you a small piece of them and piece of my cloak. The striped is like my dress, the plain like my cloak.

I hope these few lines will find you all well. I should like to see all of you very much, and Delano in particular. We have not heard from Dana since he went to Boston. I expect Byron got home before this time. If I cannot see you, I hope I shall hear from you. Do not let anyone see this for conscience sake, for I am sitting on the floor and my paper lies on a trunk. I have written all I can.

I wrote all I can on the other side so I will write a like or two on this side. I want you to write as much as I have. Fill up your letters full. I bid you all farewell, as I don't know if I shall ever see any of you again.

I have a small bill to pay to the doctor in the course of two or three weeks.

From your absent daughter,
Barilla A. Taylor

Distant Parents

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a line or two on this side I want you to write as much as
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Mrs

Stephens B Taylor

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