

November 10, 1941

Dear Ray Baker:

I have been having a wonderful visit with you. Bless you for sending this story of your early years. It's you all through.

I had the book on my list. I was going to give it to myself for Christmas and then write you about it. But of course it's much more fun to have it from you, particularly that warm-hearted introduction and letter.

It's a wonderful gift to the gods, Ray Baker, to be born with such a zest for life as you have always had, and as, praise be, you are keeping. Your book sounds as if you are having as much fun going over these past adventures as you had in going through them at the time.

So much of your experience is so familiar to me. I, too, was a pioneer child, and I, too, found in college and before the joys of out of door life. I suppose it's natural to flatter ones self that your own life has been more or less like that of one who you love and admire.

You have always been such a healthy influence to me and I have so rejoiced in the success of your work. I am ashamed of myself that I did not write when I learned that the Pulitzer Prize had gone your way. You certainly earned that distinction. Your contribution to Wilsoniana has much of that of Nicolay & Hay to Lincoln's life. No matter what else is done in the future you'll always be there, necessary and recognized.

I didn't write at the time because these days and for a good many days I am doing little that I want to. After a couple of years of fighting exhaustion I had to give in a year and a half ago, a tired old heart, and some kind of a nervous

affection. I am slowly getting stronger, but it is so slow. I came up here where I am not supposed to work more than two hours any day or see anybody more than fifteen minutes and where my devoted Sister rules me with a rod of iron. Once I made up my mind there was something that could be done I have been fairly resigned and I have loved the country. I have a little sitting room that faces the west and I am watching the sun travelling south behind a line of hills I see from my west window with daily delight. I don't care if I never see another town.

I am much more resigned in this experience than you were when you had to take your adventure in solitude. I got the book out the other day and re-read it with much more appreciation than I did at first.

I hope you are keeping well. I know Mrs. Baker looks after you and probably you are both going off for the south soon. A happy winter to you and a healthy one. Work, but don't work too hard.

Always affectionately,