

The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers

It was a great surprise as well as pleasure to meet Gen. Armstrong. He was not mistaken. I am trying to get the best out of my stay here, and as far as possible, I refrain from thinking or worrying about things, feeling willing to fold my hands and wait, if only in the end I can be myself again and go back to work. It is pretty hard at times to keep still and be patient and I could not do it alone, but I feel that my Father is helping me, by surrounding me with as much that is beautiful and lovely — Jackson grows more lovely every day — I think I would never grow tired and sick if I could, when at work, drop all now and then and go out and look at my beautiful mountains — “lift up mine eyes to the hills whence cometh my strength.” I must not write more. If Miss Jones has not gone please give her my best wishes for her success in her new work. With best wishes for yourself and a deep sense of all you have done and are doing for me, I am, Very truly yours

Olivia A. Davidson

ALS Con. 949 BTW Papers DLC.

¹ Eleanor Jameson Williams Baker (1806-91) was born in Boston. In 1840 she married Walter Baker of Dorchester, a manufacturer of chocolate and cocoa, who left her a considerable fortune on his death in 1852. All of their four children died in infancy. As a widow, Mrs. Baker devoted her considerable energies to a variety of charitable and intellectual pursuits, and established a salon for Boston intellectuals. During the Civil War her house was a center for making uniforms for the Massachusetts volunteer troops. She was also active in hospital work for the wounded soldiers, and made several tours of inspection of army hospitals. Among her efforts for the education of the blacks during Reconstruction and afterward was her provision of three annual scholarships at Hampton Institute after 1871. She also aided many individual blacks including Olivia A. Davidson, who named her first child Baker T. Washington (later changed to Booker T. Washington, Jr.).

² That the letter was written in 1884 is shown by references in BTW to Samuel Chapman Armstrong, Sept. 11, 1884.

To [Samuel Chapman Armstrong]

Tuskegee, Ala., Sept. 11 1884

Dear General: Your letter is rec'd. Our campaign will end on the 26th inst. as Hamilton says he can not be out longer than that now. He is willing to go on in the late fall, or winter. Receipts in towns will be