

Mexican Land and Colonization Company Ltd
Ensenada de Todos Santos, Baja California, Mexico
3rd October 1897

My dear Kelman,

This morning I received yours and Auntie Annie's nice long letters from Bexhill-on-Sea. Your writing is very fair in spite of the J pen, but I don't think the pen made you spell Regatta with 2 g's. Be careful with your spelling and if you are not sure of a word, look up the Dictionary. I find I have to be very careful with Spanish spelling, as many of the words are so much alike that if you forget the accent or ~ you alter the word; for instance, "Sir" is "Señor", not "Senor" and "Háblo" is "I speak" and "Habló", "He speaks". I think by Christmas I will be able to speak it fairly well. I practise a lot especially with the children, for I know they don't laugh at my mistakes.

I have seen Miss Beckwith, the lady swimmer, often¹ and when I first came to London when I was just 2 years older than you, I saw her swimming at the Lambeth Baths. She was quite a little girl. Do you know, when she was 12 she swam from London Bridge to Greenwich? I saw a picture the other day which reminded me of you and that Saturday we spent at the Tower. It was a picture of the "Tower Bridge" just after the draw had been put down. I saw the very staircase you went up and thought of that Saturday afternoon.

Oh! Kelman, I miss you a lot especially when I go for my lonely walks on Saturday afternoons. Yesterday I walked about 4 miles up a lovely canyon, hills on each side, and not a soul in sight, nothing but quail, rabbits and snakes occasionally crossing my path. I wished you had been with me. As I returned, the moon rose up over the mountains and it was a lovely sight. The air was so clear. As I got near Ensenada, I could see the lights from the houses glimmer like sparks and away up on the hill stood the hotel, one blaze of light. I could not help thinking of that verse, "*a city set upon a hill which cannot be hid,*" and I thought that was what Jesus wants all Christians to be, lights in this dark world. The children in my Sunday School sang a lovely song. Entitled "*Jesus bids us shine*". I'll give you the first verse.

Jesus bids us shine with a clear pure light
Like a little candle burning in the night.
All this world is darkness, so we must shine,
You in your little corner and I in mine.

That is a nice hymn!

My little children are very kind to me, they bring me such pretty flowers often and heaps of fruit.

I wonder when you will be able to come out. When do you think? Stick in and study for the sooner you get it over the sooner you'll be here.

Tell Uncles and Aunties I'll write them next week. I am rather tired today. This place is no doubt relaxing.

Kind love,

Your affectionate

Father

Love to Uncle Bob, Frank, Aunties Jessie and Annie, Miss Macfarlane, Miss Pritchard, Basil and Pussy Cat.

¹ "The new bathing establishments did though provide employment for some of the original 'watermen', but there was also a new breed of swimming professional who had no connection with the river working tradition. One example was Frederick Beckwith, born in Ramsgate in 1821, not only was he not from a river working background, but he managed to earn a good living from swimming, despite never being a particularly good swimmer. His reputation as a professional was due to exceptional self-publicity and secret agreements or more accurately fixing of races. His whole family were involved in the swimming world, with his daughter, **Agnes Beckwith**, in particular becoming one of the most well known professional swimmers." *The Rise of Competitive Swimming 1840 to 1878*, Claire Parker, University of Stirling.