

Dec. 26, 1889 -

My dear Papa,

My last was mailed to you from Sacramento, on the evening of the 23^d. On the 24th we went over some mountains in Southern California which the railroad crossed by some wonderful engineering and the views are magnificent. It rained here much of the time (the country here is quite green) and after we passed the summit and began to descend into the Mojave desert I could see by the way the water was running that washouts were probable. When we reached Mojave Station where there is a railway eating house and a few shanties our train was held the railroad being washed out at various points between there and Los Angeles. We were held there over Christmas day while Fred and I improved by going out on the desert and getting some cactus (aloes) sage brush and other curiosities - to us - and saw several jack rabbits, a kind of large hare. In the evening a telegraphic message came saying the

company would send us back to San Francisco, 382 miles and then send us down the coast by steamer as it would be used in ten days to make the railroad passable. So now we are northward bound about half way between Mojave and San Francisco. It is a voyage of some 500 miles or more down the coast but if the weather is fair, and the steamer not overcrowded, it may do well enough. We are all getting weary of the trip, this being our ninth day on the rail. All the passengers in this car have had this form of a sort of influenza-cold, beginning with fever and loss appetite, lasting for a day or two and ending in an ordinary cold. It is rather aggravating to have got within about 200 miles of our destination and then having to go round near 1000 to get there, but there are many fellow travellers in the same boat and the wash outs are not confined to the railroad we have been on but are general throughout Southern California.

where once in every five or six years
unusual freshets occur causing
much damage.

Many of the people in this car are
well provided for travelling, make their
own tea and coffee toast bread, heat
pies &c. but we have rather depended
on eating houses for buying things and
have not fared so well in consequence.

The ~~little~~ children are playing
cards at the table in the opposite
section. Mary is writing a line to
her mother beside me, baby is asleep
on the opposite seat and Ruth is
whining for a cracker or biscuit.

It is a wet morning and the broad
flat valley of the San Joaquin is quite
green. We should be in San Francisco
tonight.

Your affectionate son
F. E. Henderson