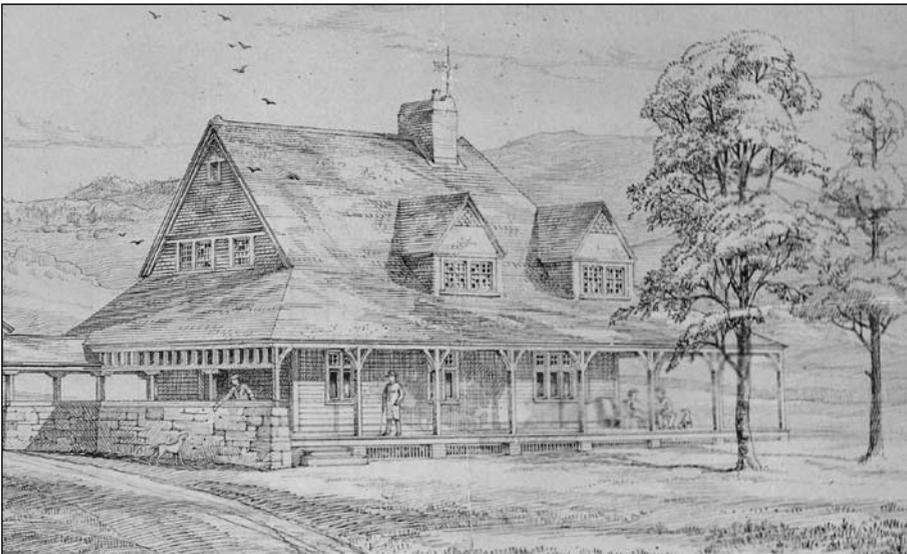


## XIV

### The Summer of 1882 Disease, Marriage, and Death

AS 1882 began, Chester A. Arthur, a Republican, was President and Grover Cleveland, a Democrat, was the Mayor of Buffalo, New York. Later in the year, Cleveland would be elected Governor of New York. At this same time, John D. Rockefeller was organizing the Standard Oil Trust, and Thomas Edison's steam-powered central station was beginning to supply electricity to New York enabling that city to sparkle with incandescent light. In this same year, the electric fan was invented by Schuyler S. Wheeler, silk replaced catgut thread in surgical operations, and the flooding waters of the Mississippi River left over 85,000 people homeless. The United States signed a treaty of friendship and commerce with Korea and also agreed to accept the provisions of the Geneva Convention of 1864 for improving the care of the wounded in wartime. Congress authorized pensions for the widows of Presidents Polk, Tyler, and Garfield, and, in an effort to end the Mormon practice of polygamy, passed the Edmunds Act. However, it would be another five years until the Edmunds-Tucker Act was enacted and the practice of polygamy would be ended by the courts of the Utah Territory. In the mountains of Colorado, a young Henry W. Hobson was practicing law. In Colorado Springs, Katherine Sophia Thayer, a lifelong acquaintance of Barclay Jermain of Albany, New York, was living with her widowed mother, Catherine McKie Thayer. Katherine's older brother, Francis McKie Thayer, was looking for farmland to buy in Iowa. As 1881 was ending, Katherine Thayer returned east to Albany, New York.



*Architect's sketch of a house that was planned for Barclay Jermain, Esq. in White Creek, New York. Barclay's mother had come from White Creek, near Cambridge, and his father owned a large tract of land there. There is no other information about the house.*



Barclay Jermain in front of Hedge Lawn, Albany, New York. On the reverse: "Given me (Katherine Thayer Jermain, later Hobson) by Barclay, September 1881." W. Notman Photographic Co., Albany, New York.

*Letters and diaries by:*

Ada Thayer, the sister-in-law of Francis S. Thayer and Catherine McKie Thayer

Ada Thayer, the daughter of the above and therefore "Kittie" Thayer's first cousin. She will later be married to the Rev. C. Morris Addison.

John Birge, Francis Thayer's business partner

Barclay Jermain

James B. Jermain

Katherine "Kittie" S. Thayer, soon to be Katherine Thayer Jermain

Catherine McKie Thayer, also occasionally "Mungie"

Francis McKie Thayer, also "Buzzie"

Robert and Julie (Barclay Jermain's sister) MacCartee (also McCartee)

*Letters and diaries written from:* Colorado Springs, Colorado; New York City, Albany, Troy, and Cooperstown, New York; and England, Belgium, and Switzerland.



1881

☞ A letter from Catherine McKie Thayer:

Colorado Springs, December 31, 1881, Sat. 9:30 A.M.

My Darling Kittie— None but God could know what I felt when I saw the last wave of your dear hand, and then you passed out of sight, on your long journey, with your brave, loving, great heart so full of conflicting emotions, hopes and fears. I think some Mothers would have hesitated about your going, but my child, we have had such strong tender love in our own home, such as I hope you may enjoy in yours sometime, that I could not keep you so far away from your Beloved One... Need I ask you to take *preventive* care of yourself under all circumstances? ...If I only knew that he was improving and you safely going on, I could feel quite happy this lovely morning... —Your loving *Mungie*.

1882

☞ Letters from Catherine McKie Thayer:

Colorado Springs, Jan 1, 1882, Sabbath. A.M.

My darling Kittie— A happy New Year to you and your Beloved, and many more in the future... —Your loving *Mungie*.

Col. Springs, Jan 5, 1882, Thurs. a.m.

My darling Kittie— ...I was in such a state that when I turned to the little clock Monday a.m., just after dear Mr. I— left, and saw the clock was stopped, not a tick, that I just screamed, you know I have laughed at every superstition, but the long suspense had so unmoved me, that I was ready for anything

your Beloved One Barclay  
Jermain.



Katherine Sophia Thayer, December 1881, "for Barclay's Xmas." Charles Bohm, Photographer, Denver.

dreadful... Be sure you let Barclay sleep and do not let him talk too much. Take care of yourself... —*Mungie*.

Colorado Springs, Jan 7, 1882.

My precious Kittie— ...Everyone inquires for you and Barclay, manifesting great interest, and this eve I hope to hear from you my darling, and then we shall know particulars. I so often wish I could know just how you all are, and where you are. By wire we learn that a cold wave has struck the Hudson River valley. You *must* be very careful. I fear you left so hastily that you were not provided with flannels, as you have worn them *of late*. Take no risks dear child, of any kind, guard your feet from cold and wet and yourself from exposure as a religious duty. Do let me feel that you will keep well if possible... Love to yourself & dear Barclay... —*Mungie*.

Colorado Springs, Jan. 8, 1882, Sab. eve 8:30.

My darling Kittie— ...I know dear child that only going to Barclay would satisfy your own heart, and I felt that you could be a comfort to him, and help the other dear ones to cheer him, and care for him. The discipline of the past has made you familiar with invalid needs early in life my darling. God grant that later years may spare you a continuance of this kind of experience, and while it is sweet to be cared for by those we love, and a precious privilege to minister to our beloved ones, still we must think of sickness and suffering as the *chastisements* flowing from sin, still as dear Father said, "We are all in God's hands, just where we would be," and if the dear Father in Heaven leads us, we will try to follow, only pray that we may ever feel the presence of His hand, ever *abide* in the Love that gave us a Savior. We will expect to hear of continuous improvement and look eagerly for letters... You can read my letter to Barclay if he consents, and I presume he will, no real secrets, only you would not let me send the first epistle. There was a little flurry of snow last eve and I did not go out... —*Mungie*.

Colorado Springs, Jan 10, 1882.

My precious child Kittie— ...Your short letter of Fri. a.m. came this eve. A few lines saying, that dear "Barclay had had a good night and felt better," and we all rejoice. May he eat, sleep, and gain strength rapidly. We all miss you, and long to have you here again, but while you can be a special comfort to your loved one, we would have you stay with him, give him my love and sympathy, for illness calls for it... I am just about through paying the house bills, they are about twice what I thought they would be, but I will not let it trouble me— everything needful to our comfort has been done in the best manner, nothing for show, and our house is entirely comfortable, and in perfect order from bottom to top. So let us enjoy it... —Your loving *Mungie*.

Colorado Springs, Jan 11, 1882.

My darling Kittie— ...It really seems to me that he was over-doing for some time before his illness. A man cannot go here, and hurry there, early and late, attend this meeting and that, day in and day out, for weeks and months, Sundays and all, without giving out (or in) sooner or later, and if the dear one confesses to being very tired nearly every night, the past two months, it is clearly his duty to take *better care of himself*. *Continual exhaustion will not do*.

*let Barclay sleep* Barclay Jermain had "consumption" at this time.

My dear Barclay— Your Thanksgiving Day letter gave me much pleasure. The children of your Sainted Mother would always have been dear to me, even without a continued acquaintance, on account of the love I bore her; and the sweet memory of our girlhood days is one of the treasures I hold. But now, that I have come to love you for your own sake, as well as for the joy and peace you have given my dear child... And now, dear Barclay, if in your brief acquaintance with my dear child, you failed to read her as a bit of human nature, with a very strong sympathy for out door life and nature, taught I hope, to see the loving Father's hand in the simplest wayside flowers, as well as in the over hanging skies, then you will have to learn more of her... but did you really take in the fact, that Kittie is neither a drawing room girl, nor a most accomplished needle worker? Well, she is not... Kittie is in perfect health, we have had our colds, and Frank is still suffering from severe cold... I am rejoiced to learn from Kittie that you are all well, you will do everything for health and this includes both the positive and negative method of doing... With love to yourself and kind remembrance to your family, Your loving friend, *C. McKie Thayer*.

—*Catherine Thayer to Barclay Jermain, December 13, 1881.*



Barclay Jermain. The Notman  
Photographic Co. Limited, Albany,  
New York.

How has it been? and how will it be? We have seen this suicidal work go on for years. It may be averted, it never can be remedied... —Mungie.

Col. Springs, Jan 17, 1882.

My precious darling Kittie— I opened last evening's letter to add a word of thanks for your telegram of last night, which found me in bed this morning. Such glorious good news, "Barclay downstairs, much better." Thank God. I trust the long anxiety is over. You know how apprehensive I am in regard to acute chest troubles and attacks. Does dear Barclay dress his feet properly? — Wear merino stockings and heavy shoes? — Are his flannels right? You need have no *sham* delicacy about these matters, health requires attention to these important portions of dress. I have struggled with you some time, and you are just getting rational. Do your duty in this matter... —Mungie.

Col. Springs, Jan. 18, 1882, Wed. eve.

My darling Kittie— ... How I wish I could by a magic wand bring you two here this bright morning. The sun is fairly hot on my head... —Your loving Mungie.

Colorado Springs, Jan 22, 1882, Sabbath eve 8, o'clock.

My precious Ting-a-ling— Your letter of last Wednesday rec'd this eve is the first since last Thursday a.m. and we all were hungering for news from our loved ones. I am so sorry to hear that too much attention to business has wearied Barclay. It is the old experience once again. I do not know how it can be avoided except by his leaving home; it is well to remember however, as a fixed fact, that anything that exhausts physically or mentally retards recovery. There is a weariness that brings rest and refreshment. There is an exhaustion that prevents both. The way to avoid the latter, we have seen to be impossible when at home, where business can reach one. And we have also seen that one must almost become a confirmed invalid to secure proper immunity from perplexing cares and responsibilities. I think you have seen so much suffering and known so much sorrow, from overwork, that you cannot fail to convince dear Barclay of the duty he owes himself, and his friends, in regard to his health. If money is worth anything, the *timely* use of it, in order to preserve health is one of its best uses, and if I were with dear Barclay, I think I would wish the suggestion, that if he has not the efficient help in his Office, needful to make his daily work what it should be, and *no more*, that he should secure it, if possible, and if necessary, it is possible. I trust this may be considered a case of special pleading, not interference... I see by the *Times* that the weather was very cold last Wednesday. I so hope none of you took cold. You must have provided yourself with what you failed to take with you in your hurried departure... Now if you go out in the cold, you must protect your feet and wear leggies. I feel almost as if I ought to wire you to this effect. It is so important to keep the *ankles warm* and I fear you will not care for yourself as you should. Has Barclay any cough or sensitiveness about his chest or side? Do see that he is properly dressed. I want him to get *perfectly well*, so does everyone, but there are right means to be used to aid in attaining this desired end...

—Your loving Mother, C. McK. T.



Katherine "Kittie" Thayer and  
her cousin, Ada Thayer Addison.  
Reproduced from an early tintype.

☞ A letter from Barclay:

Hedge Lawn, Albany, N.Y. Feb. 6th, 1882.

My dear Mrs. Thayer— Your letter of the 1st reached me yesterday morning... Indeed I feel very sorry that I have taken away from you and Ada so much of the brightness and comfort that Kittie's presence gives you. And I assure great the comfort & blessing that has cheered my sickroom and made a long and tedious convalescence bright and full of sunshine. I beg you will not think I forget that what has been my gain & happiness has been to you a loss & trial. Yet I know, my dear Mrs. Thayer, that the unselfish heart speaking from the depths of your motherly love, could not rejoice as you write that you do "in the love your darling child and I have to each other." ...I need hardly tell you that Kittie has endeared herself to every member of our household... But what shall I say to poor Ada. Here I am at a loss. Tell her for me, that when she becomes engaged, to select someone who is to have an attack of pleurisy nearly two months long, but beforehand to place herself at a point 2,000 miles distant from the pleurisy lover, then when he is sickest, to go him and be to him all that Kittie has been to me, and then write me that she forgives me for having taken away her "very best girl." ...I believe Kittie has written you that my dear sister Marie has gone to New York to undergo surgical treatment. I feel very very anxious about her— however slight the doctors may think the danger— she is, as you know, so frail... There are so many things I would so like to say to you & talk over with you and so many kind thoughts sent in Kittie's letters for which I thank you. I wish it were possible for me to go back with Kittie, but unless it is a necessity, I know & see plainly that my duty is here. In a short time I shall make a plan but can not until I know Marie is out of danger... With much love for yourself and Ada & warm regards to all, Very affectionately yours, —*Barclay Jermain*.

☞ Letters to Francis McKie Thayer:

April 30, 1882, New York Hotel.

My darling Frank [Francis McKie Thayer]— Well here. We are safe and not very tired. We met Ada at the door, and she handed Kittie a letter from Barclay who is ill again, with sore throat and some fever, but much better than he was the last week. John Birge came down this morning, he saw Barclay yesterday, in bed, but better, and today we have a telegram saying he "is quite comfortable and has less fever." So we hope he will soon be up again. I need not tell you that Kittie was sorely disappointed at not seeing Barclay and then to hear that he was ill was too much almost for her... Well my darling I hope you are learning what you need to, oh how lonely I feel and how I miss you all the time, my precious boy... —*Your loving Mother*.

May 2nd, 1882, New York Hotel.

My precious darling— ...We are progressing very well with Kittie's affairs... Barclay is said to be doing very well. Kittie has a dispatch from him daily, he has less fever daily— and we hope he will soon be well... I miss you, my darling, more than I can tell, and am so anxious that you shall settle in the

*Pleurisy* is an inflammation of the pleura, a membrane surrounding the lungs, which makes breathing very difficult. Lung infections such as pneumonia and tuberculosis are two causes of the disease. Chest x-rays, CT scans, a biopsy of the pleura, and antibiotics would be the modern treatment. In George B. Wood's *Treatise on the Practice of Medicine*, 1858, pleurisy was identified and treated as follows: "The most frequent cause of pleurisy, as of so many other inflammations, is exposure of the body to cold, especially when previously heated or perspiring. It is said that cold drinks, under similar circumstances, sometimes produce the disease... At an early period of the disease, the lancet should be freely employed. Few diseases bear bleeding better, or call for it more strongly than acute pleurisy. The patient should be placed in a sitting posture in bed, and the blood allowed to flow until a decided impression is made upon the pulse... After the first bleeding, the bowels should be thoroughly evacuated... The bowels having been unloaded, and the febrile symptoms reduced by the lancet, opium and ipecacuanha in the dose of a grain each... may be given at bedtime... Should the inflammation continue after the pulse has been subdued by general bleeding, leeches or cups may be freely applied to the chest... The patient should be kept at rest, and should avoid speaking or coughing as much as he conveniently can..."

best way, in the best place... Kittie says tell Buzzie every revolution of the sun brings me nearer Barclay, and give him my love. God bless us all as a family. Your loving Mother, —*C. McKie Thayer*.

May 4, 1882, New York Hotel.

My darling Frank— We are having fine weather, and getting on well with our work and expect to go up to Troy Sat. p.m. Barclay is improving slowly, but I trust surely... All send love to you... —Your loving *Mungie*.

Troy, May 8, 1882.

My Dear Son— Here we are in our own house... Poor Barclay is still in bed, with remittent fever, which is lessening daily, and his symptoms are all favorable... —Your loving *Mother*.

May 16, 1882, Old Home in Troy.

My dear son Frank— I am all alone in the house. Kittie over the river as Barclay is still ill enough to be confined to one floor and his bed. The fever is much diminished but he is weak and the weather is so wet and the air so chilly that he can not convalesce rapidly, we hope for better weather and more rapid mending... You must try and write oftener if you are well, and if you are not, I still must know. I had three letters from you the first week, a splendid send off... So now my boy, buckle on your armor and let us see what you can do as an Iowa farmer... —Your loving *Mungie*.

May 28, 1882, 4 Washington Park, Troy.

My dear son Frank— A rainy day here and evening... I have you constantly in mind, and your efforts in the way of beginning a new home, and I hope and pray almost “without ceasing” that you may be wisely directed in all things. A telegram from Kittie after her arrival at Lakewood said that “Barclay has passed a comfortable day.” It does not look very much as there would be a wedding in our family in ten or twelve days. I do not say this but keep my thoughts to myself and wait and pray, and hope that Barclay’s health will be restored. With a heart full of love and thanks for your frequent letters... Your loving Mother, —*C. McKie T.*

Troy, New York. June 2, 1882.

My dearest ‘Buzzie’ [Kittie Thayer to her brother]— Mother has written you of my journey to Lakewood & I will tell you of my return Wednesday and of Barclay. He is better but not strong or well yet— and we have given up the idea of having our wedding party & a wedding at his house and will be married at Jermain Church next Wednesday which makes it much less fatiguing to Barclay, then we will go to Cooperstown to Mr. Jermain’s place for a month, take two servants & Barclay’s man with horses. So we can have home comforts and lead an outdoor life. I will write you tomorrow when the hour is decided upon so you will know just when to think of me as being married. Ada is here. I wish for you every day, and sometimes I feel as if you must be here. Barclay is well enough to walk about, and with care and nourishing food he will soon be much better. I have had to ask all the people not to come and it seems sad to have my dear brother so far from well & we unable to carry out our plans. Presents have commenced to arrive. I will make you a list & please write me often. We are all

the children— you & I, and must keep together. Mother is well & sends love & I give an added kiss. —*Ever your loving Sister Kittie Thayer.*

4 Washington Park, Troy, June 4, 1882.

My dear Son— Yesterday's mail brought us yours of May 31. I had been thinking of you day after day, looking over land... As I understand it, there is not a stick, nor a building on the land... Kittie and Barclay are to be married Wednesday the 7th in the Jermain Church, in the most private manner, only his immediate family & Mr. Dunham and of ours, the Adas, & Uncle Aaron probably, & J. Birge. I wish you could be here for the little time at least, but poor Barclay improves so little, so slowly that all that we can expect is that he and his father, who has been ill, may get to the Church. There is nothing merry or bright just now, in regard to this wedding except that Barclay & Kittie are devotedly attached to each other, but we will hope and expect that the quiet Cooperstown, where the couple will be alone a month or so, with good servants, will begin, if not complete, Barclay's restoration. Should your settlement be favorably concluded, and Barclay show *very positive* signs of recovery, I may go to England with the Adas, but I cannot leave the country unless everything is moving in the right direction. God grant it may with us all. Hope you have heard a good sermon today, rain kept me in. God bless and keep you my precious son and us all. —  
*Your loving Mother.*

4 Washington Park, Troy, June 6, 1882.

My dear Son— Well my dear boy, it is two o'clock and I am tired, but I must say a word before I turn to the pillow. Cannot say how much I will sleep, for tomorrow will see Kittie united to the man of her choice and I can no longer be permitted to think of myself as entitled to her first thoughts or her time. I hope and pray that Barclay's health may be restored, and that long happy and useful lives may be their future portion. Should everything be favorable I may go with the Adas. Kittie & Barclay go to Cooperstown for a month, perhaps longer. There have been very pretty presents from B— & K's friends and B— has not seen one of them. We have had almost constant rain and B— has been able to drive but two or three times. Well, Mr. Buckley came this p.m., showed the location of your land and tomorrow J. Birge will send funds to pay for it. Mr. Buckley said... that you had written some architect for plans of house and barn: Tell me all the details my son, I love to hear them. I bought silver for Kittie in New York and *you gave her small* silver spoons, forks etc. but I did not have it sent here fearing the burglars might *scent* it and it is in New York subject to order. Kittie said she would write you tonight, but she is at work still and is very tired I know, and I will tell her to wait till the morning. Poor Barclay looked at her this p.m. (we were there) and said ("Kittie you look *so well.*") healthy. Good night, God bless us all my boy. —*Your loving Mother.*

☞ Wedding day:

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY

Troy N.Y. June 7, 1882, 7:25 P.M.

To: F. McKie Thayer— Kittie and Barclay married at one o'clock. They send love. All well. C. McKie Thayer.



*Katherine Sophia Thayer, photo taken before her marriage to Barclay Jermain in 1882. Charles E. Emery, Photographer, Colorado Springs.*

*Send following night message from Denison Ia. To: Mrs. Barclay Jermain— Many happy days to you and Barclay. F. McKie Thayer.*

☞ Cooperstown:

4 Washington Park, Troy, June 9th, 1882.

My dear Barclay & Kittie— We were busy at the cards last evening, and so I send you early morning greeting of affectionate thoughts and remembrance. Hoping to see you tomorrow eve, we are well and quite happy over your pleasant telegrams. What I fail to say now I can express when we meet. With tender love for you dear children, —C. McK. Thayer.

Delaware & Hudson Canal Company, June 12, 1882.

My dear children [Barclay and Kittie Jermain]— I am quite ashamed that I allowed the rush of farewell thoughts to crowd the dear little clock out of my mind entirely. You will forgive me, will you not? I cannot tell you in any spoken language, or in any form of speech with which I am familiar, how sweet this visit has been to me. You are so peacefully devotedly happy in each other, that it seems to add (if possible) to the unsurpassed, I almost wrote, unequal'ed, loveliness of your present home, and so, with all that you are and have at your disposal, I confidently expect you, dear Barclay, to make slow but continuous steps toward the health that brightens every other blessing. Get your tent and *live in it*. When you have fine weather, court a little fatigue, but stop short of exhaustion, rest, sleep, if you can, and then when rested, take a little more exercise, and when you get stronger, just use your arms a little, with something in your hand or hands, sitting or standing, and so adding muscular power, for with every added force you are able to acquire more. A step at a time will reach the summit of the highest hill... So my darlings, with a prayer for God's blessings on you, and on all we love, I will once more bid you Good-bye or rather, God be with you. —Your loving Mother, C. McKie Thayer.

Cooperstown, June 12, 1882.

My dear son Frank— I am waiting at the station "en route" for Troy, but have spent the Sabbath [with] Kittie & Barclay at Brookwood Point, 2 miles up (or down) the lake and the loveliest place I ever saw. Barclay seems to feel the influence of the change already as he slept better and has more appetite. The two people so quietly peacefully happy that I feel awed almost when with them. Their hearts are all right and everything will be done for B's health. God grant that his health may be restored. They insist *almost* that I shall go with the Adas and as you seem to have made a start in Iowa I think I will go to New York Tues p.m. 5 o'clock and we will sail on Wed at 3 p.m. by *Gallia* I have so much to finish up that I am almost bewildered. Annie & Wm. back to care for the house. You must communicate with John Birge after this in relation to money matters. I shall leave everything in his charge. I hope to find letter when I return stating plans about house, barn, breakers etc. Good-bye. God strengthen us all for our various duties and bring us together at last. Your loving Mother. —C. McK. Thayer.

June 13, 1882, Brookwood Point, Cooperstown, N.Y.

My darling Mother— I will try & write you just a good-bye & God bless

you from us both. Your letter came like all your loving letters. My heart is too full to write more. May the voyage strengthen you. Kiss the Adas for me. God bless you on your birthday at sea. I wish I could put my arms about you & kiss you. Your own loving little girl —*Kittie*.

June 14, 1882.

My dear Son— We sail this p.m. and I so wish that I could have heard something of your building plans before going. My heart protests at leaving my children. Your birthday was remembered in mind and prayer if not in gift. John Birge goes to Wisconsin this week and may... see you at Mapleton. You must write fully to him of your plans and expenditures and will draw by correspondence with him until some other arrangement is made by you... I must say adieu, —*your loving Mother*.

June 16, 1882, Brookwood Point, Cooperstown, N.Y.

My own Darling Mother— Today I think of you as passing your birthday at sea. I hope you are not very ill— though I think a little illness would not hurt you... Barclay seems better in some little ways— but I can not hope for rapid improvement. And if he loses no ground that in itself is encouraging. We have been to drive every day, about three miles. And Barclay has walked to the Lake and back several times. He sleeps better than when at home and eats as well... Dr. Lathrop will be here today. I will give him two weeks & if by that time Barclay is not decidedly better I shall insist upon other treatment. I do not try to do anything but nurse Barclay and keep him cheerful and encouraged. He is so sweet and tender I feel as if I were taking care of a lovely child... My nights are not disturbed, and I feel very well. So do not worry about me. I love to think of your visit here and that we three were together... Since I commenced writing I have been up to do something for Barclay seven times. So if the letter is disjointed you will know the reason... —With a heart full of love, ever your own loving *Kittie*.

June 20, 1882, Brookwood Point, Cooperstown, N.Y.

My own Darling Mother— I am thinking of you all constantly on the sea... Barclay is about the same and I am happy to say he sleeps well still, though has no appetite and his stomach seems to be very weak and inactive. We use a mild nasal douche. And so many many things remind me of my dear Father. You would be amused to see how well acquainted we are. I have insisted on Barclay's using a *tin cup* in the night instead of getting up— as it tired him. And a com-mode so that his strength is used out of doors and not tiring himself indoors... The weather is beautiful today and we are going to drive... Barclay joins me in much tender love. —Ever your own affectionately *Kittie*.

June 30, 1882, Brookwood Point, Cooperstown, N.Y.

My own Darling Mother— Here we sit in the pleasant sitting room. The morning is cool and we have a fire in the fireplace. Barclay has eaten his breakfast and is reading the *Argus*. Dr. Lathrop says he can see a great change for the better in Barclay's chest. He has no pain in his chest or anywhere, but his throat needs attention and treatment, and this we hope Dr. Bloss can do well. We rather expect him today but have not heard definitely. ...Marie is coming tomorrow. I rather dread even Marie, for how can I hand Barclay a

*tin cup*... in the sitting room or have the commode here, near the fire, as I have this morning. For these reasons it would be better for us to be alone. Still *every one* must yield in case of sickness... —Ever your own *Kittie*.

Written on the envelope in Catherine McKie's handwriting: "My dear Kittie before her sorrow."

Postmarked: July 5, 1882, Cooperstown, N.Y.  
[Addressed to: Mrs. Francis Thayer, 21 Holland Park, Bayswater, London.]  
My darling Mother— I am on the bed writing & my heart's darling is beside me very very ill. He may not live through the day, can not live many hours. The lungs are all filled with the germs of consumption and Dr. K— and all say there is no hope. *Please oh* please stay where you are & I will go to you. I must get away from everything when the light goes out. I think every day of Father's charge to me, "Do not let your dear Mother be troubled," & am glad you are not here. No one can bear my trouble— it is my own. I just asked Barclay if I should send you his love, he said, "Oh yes." —*Your own Kittie*.

Barclay Jermain, son of J.B. Jermain of Watervliet, is dangerously ill at Cooperstown. The report this morning the he was dead was untrue. A telegram today from his sister stated he was resting quietly.

—*Troy Times*, July 6, 1882.

July 5, 1882.

My dearest Brother— I have been so busy since my wedding day that I have not had a minute of leisure for letter writing. I have only written Mother. You are in my mind a great deal and I think of your farming & plans with keen interest. I am sorry to say that Barclay is not improving as I had hoped. His throat is in a terrible condition and Dr. Bloss is treating him. He came out & spent the night and will come again. Write me dear Buzzie. Your "Little Sister" is having a hard time. Do not write Mother about Barclay or let John Birge. I have written him but she is where she can rest & just where I would have her— "Away" from care & anxiety. If John be with you remember me to him most kindly. Write me soon please. Barclay so very weak, is carried upstairs & oh my heart is broken. Good bye Buzzie. —Your sister *Kittie*.

July 6, 1882, Cooperstown, N.Y.

My dear Mrs. Thayer— Kittie has asked me to write to you today as she cannot do it herself, being entirely occupied in her care of Barclay. She says she wrote you a few lines yesterday, but could not tell you all and I must tell you that she is going to lose her dear one— poor darling child. She cannot keep him long. We are all together here around him... Since Friday last his disease has taken an alarming form... the trouble seemed to culminate in the throat, but it seems besides to be a breakdown of the entire system at once. It has been an exceedingly rapid decline— and as you know, unexpected to all of us... Dr. Lathrop says he suffers little & will probably pass away quietly in sleep... Dear Kittie is keeping up wonderfully & is a wonder to all of us... I will not write more dear Mrs. Thayer & have written this most hurriedly that it may catch the next steamer. You will hear more from us in a day or two. With Kittie's love & love from myself, I remain yours most sincerely, —*Julie McCartee*.

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY

Cooperstown, N.Y. July 7, 1882.

To: Frank Mc. Thayer, Mapleton, Iowa.

Barclay can not live till night. Have written Mother. Do not telegraph. Do not telegraph her. —*Kittie T. Jermain*.

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY

Cooperstown, N.Y. July 7, 1882.

To: Frank Mc. Thayer, Mapleton, Iowa.

Barclay died this morning. —*Mrs. B. J. Germain [sic]*.

THE WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH COMPANY

Marshalltown, Ia. July 8, 1882.

To: Frank Mc. Thayer, Mapleton, Iowa.

Received news here Barclay dead. Are you going on or will I find you at Mapleton tonight. Telegraph me Maple River Junction at depot three o'clock. —*John T. Birge*.

☞ The 1882 diary of Katherine Thayer Jermain:

JERMAIN — THAYER Wednesday, June 7, 1882 at the Jermain Memorial Church, West Troy, by the Rev. G. N. Webber, D. D., pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, Troy, Barclay Jermain of Albany, N. Y. and Katherine S., daughter of the late Hon. Francis S. Thayer of Troy.

An unidentified newspaper clipping, pasted in the diary, announcing the marriage of Barclay Jermain and Katherine Thayer.

I am going back to this sacred holy ceremony and try and tell a few little facts for my own comfort— And so we were married on the 7th of June, one of the loveliest of June days— and every breath was a prayer to our Heavenly Father to guide and keep us— His children— to feel that I was Barclay's wife meant everything and to know that our lives were one, was peace and rest to my heart and soul— and so we turned away from the beautiful church with the notes of the joyful wedding march singing in our ears.

At three o'clock we started together for Brookwood. Barclay seemed to rest during the journey and had very little fever. At eight o'clock we arrived in this lovely spot, away from all, to begin our life together. It seemed so sweet and perfect to be together— And as we said our evening prayer we both felt truly thankful for God's loving kindness. The first few days were spent in planning for the best, and wisest way to live while here. And after a few hours work, our sitting room had such a pretty home look with the little things I had brought out. The drives and little walks were less of an undertaking after a week and my darling seemed better in many ways. Less fever, he slept more and was stronger. Every day we would drive, generally on the Lake Road. And when in the air my Barclay would always seem better. Friday the 30th of June, Dr. Bloss came. He gave Barclay gargles which relieved his throat, but after his visit my dear one seemed each day to grow weaker. Marie came Saturday the 1st of July and we had our tea all together in the sitting room. It was all so bright and cheerful, but I felt that my love was not to be here long. On Sunday my Darling did not get down-stairs until almost three o'clock. He was tired and needed to rest many times during dressing. We walked downstairs together and into the sitting room, where Barclay rested on the lounge. We sat by the door looking out on the Lake and had such a sweet talk, about dear Marie. At about five o'clock the Dr. came and while he was here we went to drive. I helped Barclay to the phaeton and we drove off under the trees, down to the Fennimore Barns, and about the triangle, then home. As usual he seemed invigorated by the fresh air. And after we sat together in the sitting room, until nine o'clock when Jack carried him upstairs. Monday morning we had the usual baths and at about one o'clock Jack carried my dear one down to the piazza, where we sat for a few minutes until Barclay was sufficiently rested to take a drive. We drove up to Lake Road to Thayer's and stopped for a glass of water & a piece of ice which I cracked. And my dear one held the little bits in his mouth. On our return Barclay rested on his Father's bed, had his dinner there, and afterwards we went



*Barclay Jermain. W. Kurtz Photographic Studio. Paris, Vienna, Philadelphia, & New York.*

on the piazza where we sat for an hour or two. I had my dinner there. Jack carried him upstairs at about eight o'clock and he slept rather quietly. In the morning, it being rainy and Marie not being well, I persuaded my Darling not to go downstairs. So we three spent the day in the front room. We had prayers both morning & evening and I sang *Sofly now the Light of Day*. Such a precious day. Katie and I carried my dear Barclay to our bed and that night the end began, the changes came. The memory of those next three days is mine, fresh and vivid, and it can never be taken away. The beautiful eyes spoke to me so often. When the lips were still. And the words of my Darling are all near my heart. Friday the 7th, just a month since our bright wedding morning, God called my loved one to himself. His last word & look were mine. His last kiss. And then one more Heavenly smile & my darling had gone to heaven.

~ Obituaries:

*Barclay Jermain*, son of J. B. Jermain, one of the most prominent residents of Albany county, died at 11 o'clock this morning at Cooperstown of consumption. Mr. Jermain had been ill for several months but the attack was thought to be malarial, and a serious result was not anticipated. He was married four weeks ago in the Jermain Memorial Church, West Troy to a daughter of the late Hon. F. S. Thayer of this city. Dr. J. P. Bloss of Troy was summoned Wednesday to attend Mr. Jermain but before his departure received a dispatch stating that medical aid would be unavailing. The deceased was a lawyer... His office was in Albany and his residence on the Troy Road... Mr. Jermain was a cultured musician... Though wealthy and of high social position, Mr. Jermain was affable and kind to the humblest whom he met, and his death will be widely deplored. The deceased was about twenty-eight years old, but had attained influence in social, political, and business circles rarely gained at that age. His character and personal accomplishments make his death a loss which will be deeply felt in this vicinity.

—*Unidentified obituary pasted in Katherine's diary.*

The funeral of Barclay Jermain took place at 4 o'clock yesterday afternoon (July 10, 1882) from the late residence at Hedge Lawn on the Troy Road, and was very largely attended by residents of Albany, Troy and other cities, attesting in an eloquent manner the universal esteem in which the deceased was held... —*Troy Daily Times.*

July 11, 1882, *Office of James B. Jermain*, Albany, N. Y.

[Addressed to Catherine McKie Thayer in London.]

My Dear Mrs. Thayer— You have undoubtedly heard of the death of my dear son Barclay & its circumstances through your dear daughter Kittie. I write this to urge you not to return home earlier on that account. She will return with my family the latter part of this week to Cooperstown, where we shall all remain 'til the middle of September. She bears up bravely under this sad affliction and is a special comfort to us all. She is as dear to me as one of my very own children and is a great comfort to me & my family under this sad blow. Hoping that this may find you in improved health and that you may be sustained under this sad news. —Yours Truly, *James B. Jermain.*

Hedge Lawn, July 11, 1882.

My dear Mrs. Thayer— Kittie has asked me to write again for her today, as she needs all the rest she can get. I could not find time to write until all was over, but you will already have received Father's letter and know that our



*Katherine Thayer Jermain as a young widow.*



*Hedge Lawn, the Albany, New York, residence of the Jermain family.*

dear Barclay is at rest. On Friday morning (the 7th) he passed away in sleep. For hours before & indeed all through the previous day & night, he had been unconscious with only intervals in which he came back to us, but in those he knew us all and said many things that are sweet to remember. He knew Kittie until the very end and her voice seemed almost to call him back from the other world. Not 10 minutes before he drew his last breath, he kissed her & smiled. The doctor told us that he did not suffer during the last day & night and it was a comfort to us to know that. Dear Kittie has borne it all so nobly & bravely, we cannot but love her more than ever. ...During the last two nights she slept a good deal on the bed beside him while Mr. McCartee and I watched. She asks me to say to you that she is not ill— only worn & weary and that she is going to take great care of herself & you must not worry about her. Katie is most faithful & devoted & will stay with her and sleep near her. It is Kittie's desire to return with father to Cooperstown and she says she could have no peace of mind in going anywhere else but that later in the summer she will consent to go with us to the sea. ...Be assured dear Mrs. Thayer that we will do all we can for her to help her bear her sorrow & to comfort and help her. We feel very much for you too, knowing how hard it is for you to be away from her at this time... We all love her so much and father clings to her & finds great comfort in being with her. He has borne up very bravely, is generally very calm, only breaking down now & then, but he will feel this loss more & more as we all will. It has been so sudden, it seems, yet like a dream to us... We all— Kittie, Marie, Will McLure, Robert & myself came home on Saturday... and it was a sad journey. We were able to have a drawing room car to ourselves and dear Barclay's coffin was placed on the floor in the center of the car— where we covered it with a soft shawl & laid on it a cross of white flowers Kittie & I made at Brookwood. We arrived at Albany safely at half-past-seven. The services at the house were yesterday (Monday) afternoon at 4... and after the crowd had dispersed, except a small number of near relatives & friends, we laid him to rest near his mother in that sweet hallowed spot in our cemetery. Some thoughtful members of the family had had the grave lined with evergreens & flowers, so that it seemed scarcely like laying him in a *grave* to leave him there. Kittie will want me to tell you too

how sweetly he looked, so peaceful & calm & with a happy smile on his face. She stayed long hours by his side, as he lay in the library and it was she who, with Katie's help, did everything for him— and dressed him. Dr. Bloss has been down to see Kittie— he tells her that if Barclay had gone back with her to Colorado last winter, his life might have been spared some time longer, but after the commencement of this recent trouble in the lung, nothing could have been done for him. Dr. Bloss went out to Cooperstown once, the week before last— at Kittie's request to see Barclay. I feel that there is much more to tell, but perhaps this is enough for the present, and I want to finish this letter in time to send today. We all join with Kittie in warmest love to you & to Mrs. Ada & all. Kittie says she will write to you as soon as she feels able. —Yours very sincerely, *Julie McCartee*.

*Written on the envelope:* “First letter from my poor stricken child.”

July 16, 1882, Hedge Lawn.

My darling Mother— It is very hard for me to write even to you. I have nothing to say. My all is gone. Barclay, my darling, is in Heaven & I am left. Julie wrote you so I shall not repeat. One month of the most heavenly love was given to me— it is mine still, and I can live now each hour, each minute & my heart is full of thankfulness to my Heavenly Father for those few short weeks. I find I have no need to go over the ocean. I am only at peace to be where my darling Husband was, here & in Cooperstown & where I have hold of dear Mr. Jermain's hand... I know, or I do not know, how you long to be near me and try to comfort me... But— the first ten days in Cooperstown I did believe my beloved one was better, the absence of night-sweats, fever, refreshing sleep & added strength made my heart, our hearts, glad. The Dr. told me the disease only stopped to grow with greater rapidity. I did everything for my darling from first to the last. Gave him his last bath & put on his underclothes. He knew I would & then they were all so thoughtful & let me do everything I wished. The sacred hours I spent with him— when I could be so near him & kiss the dear lips that were stilled & then his friends, whom he *honored*, bore him away & placed him in a bed of flowers & greens... Julie & Robert are at Brookwood where they will remain for the summer. Helen, Katie, Father & myself go tomorrow... We go to the cemetery, Gods Acre I love to call it, every evening— & last evening at sunset we went to the beautiful church & sat there an hour. Then we have prayers together at night & we talk together of the darling one... I have Barclay's own room in the 3rd story & am among his books & all that was most familiar to him & where we used to sit & look out on the western hills last winter & where he would talk to me of his Mother... A word about your return— You are over the ocean in safety. You are with our dearly loved Adas. You needed an entire change. I feel anxious for you to stay on the other side. Go around a little & see all you can & come back in October. I do not need you. Even you my darling, my most precious one, could not comfort my heart, no one can— & I ask you to stay where you are for my sake... You can do me a great service in looking at headstones. I wish something very beautiful at my Darling's grave & maybe you will be able to see some kind of a cross, or some design which you can get an architect to map for you... Write to your little girl— Kittie, Barclay can not call me his little girl any more. I am tired. I can not write long letters. This is an exception & has been very hard but you will make it out. —Your own loving daughter *Kittie*.

The Last Will & Testament of Barclay Jermain, Proved and recorded December 18th, 1882... I give devise and bequeath all my property of whatsoever nature and wheresoever situated to Miss Katherine S. Thayer of Troy, and her heirs absolutely and to and for her and their sole use and benefit... executed on the second day of January in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two. —*Barclay Jermain*.

21 Holland Park, Bayswater, London, July 18, 1882.

My dear Frank— [Catherine McKie Thayer to her son] Out of the depths of a Mother's love and sympathy, I have just written your poor sister, the bride of one short month. As yet, we have only the cable message, sent on the 15th, delayed as I see so plainly, that I might not live through the first few days of darkness with Kittie, never forgetting to spare me even in the midst of this terrible crashing blow. I felt that I must go to her at once, but her message says "do not come, have sent letters." So for these I wait, but I feel that I cannot be long separated from my suffering child. It does seem dreadful that all her bright hopes & anticipations are buried so soon. I have not seen Dr. Churchill, but will try to see him in Paris after hearing from Kittie. I am very well and all are very kind and I shall try to be calm and self controlled, but when my own suffer, I must suffer with them. I hope to hear from you very soon. God keep you and us all. John Birge has visited you before this I suppose. Your loving Mother. —*C. McKie Thayer.*

July 24th, 1882, Brookwood Point, Cooperstown, N.Y.

My own Darling Mother— Another Monday. A week today since we came here. The longest week I ever spent, so so lonely— and full of longing. I would not be in any other place and my room where my darling was with me is where I am most restful. I have a large writing table and the little things on it that were down in the sitting room where we used to sit so much. It is a comfort to me to think of your little visit— how you saw us together— and you will always be glad you came... Three weeks ago today we took our last drive together. My great comfort is in knowing how perfectly happy he was in my love & how I filled his heart. The night before he went to Heaven I was beside him on the bed & he was looking at me. And all the time I was given strength to control myself & he said turning to Robert, "Those beautiful eyes, they are so lovely." So you see my eyes were not red. —Good-bye, God bless you. Your *Kittie.*

July 25, 1882. Cooperstown, New York. [Postcard from Kittie to her brother.] Dear Frank— Please write me. I am anxious to hear from you. Mother is well, heard yesterday. I am quite well. Hope you will get on all right and that the Puppy will be acceptable. All well here. Weather beautiful. Lake a constant pleasure to all. I can not write letters & so you will excuse postals. Much love from your sister —*Kittie.*

### ☞ Letters from Europe:

Dover, Kent, England, August 8, 1882.

My Darling Child— ... We left London at 12:45 and came 68 miles to Canterbury, where we stopped three hours and saw the Cathedral, a glory of the older time, Norman & Gothic, and here the Black Prince is buried. Nothing in architecture has seemed so wonderfully beautiful to me. What shall I say to you my poor stricken darling is just this— that I do feel that if we were together, I think I could do something for you. I could not bring back the "loved and gone before." I could not drive away the darkness that has settled on the future, all that is before you, as it seems to you, but perhaps we could



*The Marble Arch, London.*

look so steadily, so constantly, toward our Father's house, and strive so earnestly to do our duty, that something like a more peaceful resignation might sometimes come to your poor heart. We read that God promised to comfort "even as a Mother comforteth." ... You must guard your health... to have you ill would kill me. God has work for you still, His work, I know you feel all this, but we must speak to each other fully. —Your loving *Mother*.

Dover, August 8, 1882.

My dearest Kittie— I have wished for you more than ever today for we have seen a sight that would I know appeal to you— Canterbury Cathedral. So grand & magnificent & so solemn it fairly breathes devotion into one's mind. I felt you & I could have walked about & almost lost our sorrows in the contemplation of this superb old structure that has withstood destruction so many hundred years. It is not to be described. One must see it to realize its glory & beauty... Do keep well & try & get change of air for you need it. What sweet memories you have & how truly you have been & are blessed in having the confidence & love of so true a man. He is *yours* Kittie & *forever* remember that. God bless you & spare us to meet ere long. Ever yours, —*Ada*.

Belgium, August 13, 1882.

My darling little One— ...How is it with you my darling child today? I know how in many respects it is. "So many weeks ago today this was done." And so your weeks pass. My heart is heavy, heavy; the lightness what there was, and there was great joy for you and your beloved one, and for myself, through you two precious ones, seems to have departed, but I try to think of God's love, that he has given our loved ones victory over death through His dear son, and you are my precious child still, and my dear boy is spared, and there are so many mercies and blessings that they cannot be numbered and I try to feel resigned to God's will and pray for the same for you... Ada sends love in which my whole soul joins. —*Mother*.

August 14, 1882, Belgium.

My dear Frank— Yours of 26th came just as we were leaving London, and I had time to send you a p.c. only. We, the Adas and myself, left London Tuesday at 12 noon for Dover by the Sea, stopped two hours at Canterbury Cathedral, which impressed me more than any of the grand old treasures I have seen. It stands on a little green common with a few trees scattered about it... As to your arrangements for building, I am just waiting to hear what you do or have done. I know you will do your best, and if you make a mistake only *once*, you will learn constantly, experience is a thorough teacher or should be... —Your loving *Mother*.

August 16, 1882, Cooperstown.

My dear Brother Frank— I have had two letters from Mother within three days. She is very well and anticipates going to Switzerland and Germany... The weather is lovely but very very dry. The grass is brown and no sign of rain... Every evening we drive and I enjoy going along this lovely lake. Next week an artist is coming to paint the view from the piazza... I should so like to have you write me of your buildings and just what you are doing. I am so so lonely, and it is an effort to live day after day when the light has gone which made all so bright. I hope all is well with you dear Buzzie. We must nei-



*La Staubbach à Lauterbrunnen*  
drawing on hotel stationery used  
by Catherine Thayer.

ther of us give Mother any cause for trouble— and by God's grace we can do much to make her happy. With much love and praying God to bless & keep you, I am ever your affectionate sister, —Kittie.

Hedge Lawn, August 20, 1882.

My Dear Mrs. Thayer— Your very kind letter to me arrived a few days since, but was inadvertently left by me in Brookwood, Cooperstown... I am happy to say that (your daughter's) health has much improved and that she considers herself *well*... She is very dear to us... She is very kind and affectionate to me, and I love her as my own child. We intend to remain at Brookwood until the middle of next month... —James B. Jermain.

*Le Staubbach à Lauterbrunnen Switzerland*, August 23, 1882.

Dear Frank— We are just down 7 miles from a hotel facing the view above— glorious and beautiful. We go to Berne... Kittie has sent for a *male* St. Bernard pup... so I travel with a dog again but she wishes to preserve the breed and *you* know my self denial is a *luxury to myself*. God prosper you in all things. Do you go to Church? —Your loving Mother.

August 28th, 1882, Brookwood Point, Cooperstown, N.Y.

My dearest Mother— Another Monday has come. And I hardly know where to turn. The restless longing for my Darling is so hard to bear. And each day I see how necessary he was to me and my happiness. The others were not dependent upon him. As I was. Julie has Robert and the others were all living their lives, but my life was his. And now I feel so alone... I am going to send you a cable this week, for it must seem such a long time to wait for news. I wonder I never thought of it before... Kiss the Adas and ask Aunt Ada to write me a line. Ever your aff. Daughter, —Kittie.

September 1st, 1882, Brookwood Point, Cooperstown, N.Y.

My own dear Mother— Your letters do not come so often since you



Right: Brookwood, Cooperstown, New York, in 1882 the summer residence of the Jermain family and where Barclay Jermain died. Above: Lake Otsego from Brookwood.



started on your continental tour, but I know you are writing every few days, and that now you must be in Switzerland... God bless & keep you always. Ever you affectionate —Kittie.

September 14th, 1882, The Old Home.

Brookwood Point, Cooperstown, N.Y.

My Dearest Mother— One year ago today since I went to Troy and in driving to our house met dear Barclay. And he came in and took a cup of tea with me. How long ago it seems, and yes, only a year. A year tomorrow since my darling and I spent the day in the lovely country together. And then all the days following have their such sacred associations. I feel that Barclay is very near me. And I seem to think of him all the time. How kind the Heavenly Father was to let us live even for our short month together. And how much I have for which to be thankful... In a day or two I shall be away from this lovely spot. And no one can ever know the rest and peace I have experienced while here... Ever your own —Kittie.

November 14, 1882, Hedge Lawn.

My dear son Frank— I am so grieved and anxious in not hearing from you that I hardly know what I am about. Surely I feel that a letter must have gone astray as your last telegram more than two weeks ago said you had written. If I were fully able or felt that I could go I would lose no time in going to Iowa. If I feel stronger I may go, but certainly unless I hear something definite and satisfactory I must send someone soon if I cannot go myself, as I cannot bear this suspense much longer. Every night I pray for the morning mail and every morning for the night mail, hoping I may receive some intelligence. If you are ill I *should know it*, and if not I should hear from you, and so my mind and heart are rent with conflicting thoughts. Do my dear son put an end to this long suspense in some way. I am weary, weary, weary. Your sister tries to bear her sorrow alone, to carry her burden. God help her. May God keep you and us in all things. Ever your loving praying hopeful Mother. —C. McK. Thayer.

☞ A diary:

May 27, 1882. Kittie left early for Lakewood N. Jersey to join Barclay.

May 29. Either this p.m. or tomorrow I cannot now say which, Ada and I went to Albany Cemetery after calling at Mr. Jermain's. Saw the Jermain Memorial. We read all the inscriptions & I said, "here dear B. stood when his mother was buried."

June 7. This was written in London about the 28th. Troy. Today at 1 o'clock at the Jermain Memorial Church my darling Kittie and Barclay Jermain were married. Ada & I went to Mr. Jermain's & dined & saw the bridal party leave for Cooperstown. God bless them and make Barclay well.

June 10. This p.m. I left for Cooperstown to see my dear children— found Kittie looking well, but I thought under a well disguised appearance I could almost feel a great weight of anxious responsibility in sympathy with her dear Barclay...

June 12. This a.m. rose early, breakfasted before the open fire. It does seem so strange to have my dear little girl leave me and give her presence to another, but I thank God for the love these two bear each other, and my prayer is the same, that they may enjoy each other many years...

June 24. Safely arrived at Liverpool & London by rail...

July 5. Ada and I went in p.m. to Botanical Gardens. Saw such beautiful flowers...

July 7. Friday the 7th. At Cooperstown dear Barclay died at 11 o'clock— how can my poor child bear this death of her love and all her future with him. I did not know of this until by message on Monday the 17th...

July 10. This written later. Dear Barclay buried beside his mother at 4 p.m. Little did I think when looking at the burial place of his dear Mother, that so soon, so soon, in six brief weeks, he would be buried beside her... God help the mourning ones.

—Excerpts from the 1882 diary of Catherine McKie Thayer, a small diary that she purchased and wrote when in London. Therefore, some of the entries are retrospective.

1883

Colorado Springs, Jan 22, 1882.

My dear darling— ...It is evident from what you say, that Mr. Jermain considered the sum invested, more or less & yours by will— *permanent investment* on the principle that it will not do to kill the goose that lays the golden egg. You see, that if you come to cut down the principal, the am't of the check you speak of every year or two, your income, would gradually diminish. When you said you had plenty of spending money, I thought of course you meant, of *income* and as you did not send me "the little book" I could not judge for myself. I really think Kittie, and I say it in all kindness, that you do not know how fast money goes and for your income you are too generous to your friends and you need not go *out* of Mr. Jermain's family to learn the lesson of careful expenditure. Now, as I should *be very sorry* that Mr. J— as you say should think you are extravagant, and as the payment of the check for \$500 will leave your bk acc't "very low" (and debts to pay?) I send you New York draft for \$500. If you owe when this reaches you *pay your debts* from it but do not make another one, not *actually needful* to you. Watch the little outlays and do not let the generous nature of your heart



Albany Rural Cemetery, Albany, New York. The grave of Barclay Jermain, Celtic cross, and his parents, James Barclay Jermain, August 13, 1809–July 12, 1897, and Catherine Rice Jermain, 1823–1873.

The letter must have been written in 1883, not 1882 as it is dated, since it refers to "will" and Barclay Jermain had died in July 1882.



*Katherine Thayer Jermain, J. H. Kent, Photographer, Rochester, New York.*

overcome your judgment, just let your friends *learn* that you have not a large income and have not a large sum to draw from. Our expenditures as a family the last two years have been great for our means, but we did what we thought best at the time, and will not complain now... —*Mother*.

☞ James B. Jermain to Katherine Thayer Jermain:

February 9, 1883.

My Dear Daughter— Your letter of yesterday received this morn and read with delight... You have been of great comfort to me in our sad bereavement... —*James B. Jermain*.

February 9, 1883.

My Dear Daughter— Yours of the 8th received this am & read with great pleasure... We miss you very much at home and regret that you are not here to enjoy the fine sleighing we have had for the last few days. There is nothing new at home... —*James B. Jermain*.

April 30, 1883.

My Dear Daughter— ...You & Barclay are more frequently in my thoughts than any other of my children and... I long for the time when I shall again see you... —*James B. Jermain*.



In May of 1882, Robert Koch, working in his laboratory at the Imperial Health Office in Berlin, Germany, announced that his research team had isolated the germ that caused tuberculosis. Six years earlier Koch had published his pioneering work identifying the germ that caused anthrax. In 1883, as leader of the German Cholera Commission, he traveled to Egypt where he isolated the germ that caused cholera. Koch's findings ended the belief that "bad air" caused these diseases, and he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Medicine in 1905.

After the death of his only son, James B. Jermain endowed the Barclay Jermain Professorship of Natural Philosophy at Williams College, his son's Alma Mater.