

stopped saw
G. m. g. p. p.
Walker had
dinner with
Mum.

(1)

St James, Minn.
May 6/1987

Dear children & grandchildren,
Well we are back in old
Minnesota again, but not a very
happy home coming, poor Florence
is just wasting away growing
weaker every day, some days she
doesn't seem to know us at all
than at other times she will know
all that comes in, Sunday Veryl
& Walter was up but she did not
know them at all, she just lay in
a steeper than again she will lay
with her eyes open just looking and
looking. Today has been that way,
when they took her temp, at noon it
was 101. plus 138. the lowest temp
she has had since we came, she can
use her hands a little better now than
when we first came but her body
has grown weaker now she just
lays where we put her, we have to
change her just like a baby and its

getting worse at first would be 2+3 hours between times but now its about every hour if not oftener, Tuesday dad ordered the oxygen tank for her it helps her to breath a little easier.

she was operated on the day before Easter or 20 of March for about 6 days they said she came on fine than Bronchial pneumonia set in + she has just gone down now her heart is enlarged + one Valve is leaking, Veryl said she had not written you much but feel that you can stand the shock of hearing that she has fooled the Doc. + ~~survived~~ better than I have the new's of her going come and be unprepared for it if she could only be moved just feel sure that there would be more hope for her if Veryl + I had her we could take care of her, her bronchial tubes has not cleared out and her lungs keeps filling up, they have put

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stuff on till they have her
throat + lungs all blistered
so now they don't put anything
on, the Dr's + nurses says its
just a question of time may be
weeks that she will linger on
I can't but hope that they are
mistaken but I know she has
failed since we came when we
came she could raise her hips
for us to put the pan under and
she could raise her legs, but now
we have to raise them up + hold them
and when we put them down we
have to take them + lay them down
she seemed to know Pearl + Mrs Smith
today, Pearl got her a pop ~~or malted milk~~
+ the first taste she said, "tastes as if it
was out of the fruit pill?" but I told her
it was pop + I guess she liked it as
she drank it all, so when they left
I asked her if she could tell Pearl
wants for the malted milk + she
said "I'll try to," than as they went
out the door she called to them "good by!"

④

Edith has the baby & does she
& Ray make a fuss over him,
he sure is a sweet little
fellow. Ernie wants to keep
the other three to geather if
Veryl dosint want Rachel Ann
I suppose we will keep her. wish
she was more like Justice would
not dread it at all. Am glad that
Charlie is home hope he is
feeling much better but expect
it will be a long time befor
he is strong again. Dempsey
wont home with Walter Sunday
so dad & I have our trailer house
to our selves, have it in the back
yard there at Ernie's. May and
Dale Simson is keeping herise
for Ernie they came Monday
A.M. she has one girl coming
to she sure is far from a nice
child, May is not well has dropsy
& she sure has her hands full
trying to get cleaned out, and
the girls is not much good.

(5)

Ernie has keep quit sober since we have been here, he sure is suffering now when its to late to make amends doesnt sleep, went home at 8 last nite to get to bed but at 11 he was still awake and at a little after 5 he came back to the hospital, was with her all day yesterday, as we went to Garden City for special meeting, dady sit with her tuesday nite till 4 than the nurse Miss Jender said she told him to go home as he was getting so nervous & last nite Edith & Ethel stayed dad & I will probly stay up to nite let him stay till mid nite than I will come in, its quit a walk way around & I dont care to go through the switch yards at nite Russel is out to G-pa Smiths We stopped and saw the Grand Canyon, Friday noon, Was with Florence all nite we though that she was going but she reversed & when I left at 7 she

(6)

seemed about as yesterday a. m.,
Ernie & dad was both at the hospital
with me but just one of us stayed
with her at a time, well we went in
& at dinner with the family I was just as
tired to care to cook so stayed & helped do
dishes, but seemed I could have screamed
befor we got through Miss talking & getting
my nerves so, Dad has gone back to the
hospital, I suppose I ought to go but so hard
to sit there & do nothing, & the nurse said
that only one ought to be in the room
at a time & seems Ernie just can't rest
had a letter from Aunt Della & Aunt Effie
& Veryl sent on your letter & a couple
from R. got them this a. m., Aunt Effie
is not at all well, said Leta was not
much better than when she left hospital.
Hazel has a baby girl, well this must
be all, take good care of yourself
& let us know how all are once in
a while, had planned on bring with you
the 18 but don't look for us now,
love to all from all, Mother & Grandmother
one of the Drs. said this a. m. that I might fool us
all yet.

[The following letter is from Bertha Rendall, written to her “children and grandchildren”, but is obviously written directly to one of her children. Due to the note at the top of the letter about the Walkers, it would make sense that she was writing to daughter Mae, who was married to Lewis Walker. Bertha’s writing here is mostly about her daughter, Florence, who is nearing death.

Any misspellings in the letter are mostly left as is (and italicized), double question marks (??) are inserted where the writing cannot be positively identified, punctuation and capitalization may be added or omitted to clarify meaning, and bold italicized comments in brackets like this one are inserted to add extra details.]

[Note at the top says...]

Stoped & saw G.ma & G.pa Walker had lunch with them.

[This is probably referring to her daughter Mae's parents-in-law, Charles and Ida Walker, who lived in Algona, Iowa]

St James, Minn.

May 6 1937 **[4 days before Florence passed]**

Dear Children & grandchildren,

Well we are back in old Minnesota again, but not a very happy homecoming, poor Florence is just wasting away growing weaker every day, some days she doesn't seem to know us at all than at other times she will know all that comes in. Sunday **[daughter]** Veryl & **[her husband]** Walter was up but she did not know them at all, she just lay in a *stoooper*, then again she will lay with her eyes open just looking and looking. Today has been that way, when they took her temp at noon it was 101 pulse 198. The lowest temp she has had since we came. She can use her hands a little better now then when we first came but her body has grown weaker. Now she just lays where we put her, we have to change her just like a baby and its

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geting worse. At first would be 2 & 3 hours between times but now its about every hour if not oftener. Tuesday dad ordered the oxygen tank for her. It helps her to *breath* a little easier.

She was operated on the day before Easter **[March 28 of that year]** or 20 of March. For about 6 days they said she came on fine, than Bronchial pneumonia set in & she has just gone down. Now her heart is enlarged & one valve is leaking. Veryl said she had not written you much but

feel that you can stand the shock of hearing that she has fooled the Dr's & nurses. Better than to hear the *new's* of her going, come and be prepared for it. If she could only be moved. Just feel sure that there would be more hope for her if Veryl & I had her. We could take care of her. Her bronchial tubes has not cleared out and her lungs keeps filling up; they have put

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stuff on till they have her throat & lungs all blistered, so now they don't put anything on. The Dr's & nurses says its just a *qushion* [**question**] of time, may be weeks that she will linger on. I can't but hope that they are mistaken but I know she has failed since we came. When we came she could raise her hips for us to put the pan under and she could raise her legs, but now we have to raise them up & hold them and when we put them down we have to take them & lay them down. She seemed to know Pearl [**Ernie's sister?**] & Mrs. Smith today. Pearl got her a pop malted milk & the first *tast* she said, "*tasts* as if it was out of the junk pill" [**not sure if she means "junk pail" as in a garbage can?**] but I told her it was pop & I guess she liked it as she drank it all. So when they left I asked her if she could tell Pearl thanks for the malted milk & she said "I'll try to" - *than* as they went out the door she called to them "good by"

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Edith has the baby & does she & Ray make a fuss over him. He sure is a sweet little fellow. [**This is referring to Florence and Ernie's youngest, Dean, who was about 6 months old at this point. Edith is Ernie's sister, and she and her husband Ray Hoffman adopted Dean after Florence died (4 days after this letter was written)**] Ernie wants to keep the other three to *geather*. [**this is a little confusing, as they had 5 other children, ranging in age from 4-16. Maybe he was thinking he could handle the older 2, but wanted the younger 3 to be raised by someone else?**] If Veryl doesn't want Rachel Ann, I suppose we will keep her. [**Bertha's own daughter was Rachel Ann, but Florence's next-to-youngest was Rachel Lucille, who is most likely who she means here.**] Wish she was more like Tootsie [**Mae's daughter, Delores**] would not dread it at all. Am glad that Charlie [**Lewis' son from his previous marriage**] is home, hope he is feeling much better but expect it will be a long time before he is strong again. Dempsey went home with Walter [**probably Veryl's husband?**] Sunday so dad & I have our trailer house to our selves, have it in the back yard there at Ernie's. May and Dale Simson is keeping house for Ernie. They came Monday A.M. She has one girl coming & she sure is far from a nice child. May is not well has dropsy [**this is now called edema, which is when the area under the skin fills with fluid**] & she sure has her hands full trying to get cleaned out, and the girls is not much good.

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Ernie has *keep quit* [kept quite] sober since we have been here. He sure is suffering now when *its to* late to make amend. Doesn't sleep, went home at 8 last nite to get to bed but at 11 he was still awake and at a little after 5 he came back to the hospital. Was with her all day

yesterday, as we went to Garden City for special meeting. Dady set with her Tuesday nite till 4 than the nurse Miss Zender said she told him to go home as he was getting so *nearvous*, & last nite Edith & Ethel stayed. Dad & I will probably stay up to nite, let him stay till midnite than I will come in. *Its quit* a walk way around & I don't care to go through the switch yards at nite. Russel [**Florence's oldest**] is out to G-pa Smiths. We *stoped* and saw the Grand Canyon, Friday noon. Was with Florence all nite. We *though* [**thought**] that she was going but she revived & when I left at 7 she

[page 6]

seemed about as yesterday a.m. Ernie & dad was both at the hospital with me but just one of us stayed with her at a time. Well we went in & at dinner with the family I was just *to* tired to care to cook so stayed & helped do dishes, but seemed I could have screamed *befor* we got through. May's talking gets on my *nearves* so. Dad has gone back to the hospital. I suppose I ought to go but so hard to sit there & do nothing & the nurse said that only one ought to be in the room at a time & seems Ernie just can't rest.

Had a letter from Aunt Delia [**Bertha's husband's brother Elmer's wife**] & Aunt Effie [**Bertha's sister**], & Veryl sent on your letter & a couple from R [**daughter Rachel?**]. Got them this A.M. Aunt Effie is not at all well said Leota [**Effie's son Edgar's wife**] was not much better than when she left Calif.

Hazel [**Effie's daughter**] has a baby girl. Well this must be all. Take good care of yourself & let us know how all are once in a while. Had planned on being with you the 18 but don't look for us now.

Love to all from all. Mother & Grandma

One of the Drs. said this a.m. that F might fool us all yet.