

Translation

Yarmouth, Sept. 5, 1796

My dearest Mother: With a joyful heart I take my pen to write you, having had news of you last week, a letter to me from dear Therese and one to Mr. Meredith⁸⁴ from my dearest Father. They are dated April 23, and are written in a tone that cannot fail to give us great pleasure. I confess that I was getting impatient not having received any letters from you for four months. Now I am perfectly happy in the thought that you are well and that my dear Father's business affairs look so cheerful. May this favorable prospect be confirmed to the fullest extent of all your wishes is the prayer of one Archange, who has every welfare of her family at heart and their success ever in mind.

In my last letter I told you about the painful illness of my dear Meredith for several months past. He is almost recovered now, I am happy to say. A very good doctor has had him in charge for some time and has done wonders for him. I am sure you would not recognize him if you could see him. He is as thin as my dear Father. He is cheerful, however, and has the same happy countenance, and I feel that with great care he will have better health than ever. As for me I should be called the Goddess of Health, for I have not had an hour's illness since the smallpox. The children are fairly well. They have slight colds now, nothing of any account. Little folk are subject to such ills and one must expect them.

Get ready, all of you, to make your bow to the wife of an aid-de-camp, Madam Meredith. Let anyone dare to contradict me and I shall make them jump. For I am a lady of consequence, if you please. Ask Uncle Grant if he remembers saying "the little Monkey will be something at last." But joking aside, I must tell you that a general, named Loftus,⁸⁵ the son-in-law of Marquis Townshend, at present in command at this station, has taken a fancy to my good husband, and appointed him his aid-de-camp, and that without any application what-

84 David Meredith, for whom see *B. H. R.*, I, 15.

85 William Loftus, colonel of the Twenty-fourth Dragoon Regiment, who was commissioned major general, May 3, 1796, and lieutenant general in September, 1803. As a junior officer he had seen service in the American war. See British army lists, *passim*.