

6/23 1823

There is very little credit due, my dearest Maria for compliance with a request which is agreeable to one own inclination, so I beg you will not consider me the most obliging of correspondents when you see the very first mail brings an answer to your letter. I began to feel the want of some communication between us, and even before the arrival of yours determined to write indeed had I been at home & happy you would not have had so long a respite but the increased indisposition of my friend Mr. Hoffman induced me to make a visit to New York the latter part of May, and I have been but one week home. she still continues ill but as her situation may not vary much during the summer I have promised to see her again during the season, and came away leaving her evidently in a condition which admits no hope of recovery. My dear Ben can tell you how deserving she is of affection, and how long we have known & loved each other.

I do not know any thing my dear Maria, that has so general an effect on the countenances of one family circle as one of your letters. we were all so bright and smiling and delighted yesterday that a stranger would have taken us for a set of the best tempered people in the world - and your description of your darling boys charmed us into lavishing such a multitude of kind epithets that had you been present you would have had no difficulty in fixing their titles for life without searching the scriptures in imitation of your pious friend. I like your idea of combining an agreeable association with the denomination of a child, and this is the

reason family names are so constantly perpetuated from one generation to another. but then fashion & fancy are so various and our children not feeling the dignity of bearing a title down to posterity which sounded well to antediluvian ears and in ancient tongues, may not sympathize in our taste. and hence the difficulty I have witnessed in other parents, before you. though I must confess it has continued longer with you than most others. I suppose because yours are boys, and are not to change them as girls do. It may be too, that you experience an inconvenience, you are willing to save your sons' wives. for Maria is certainly too pretty a name to exchange for Benjamin and yet the prodigality of modern usage gives up all to his bands and unless when personally & familiarly addressed you are as much Mrs. Benjamin Grath as if you had never used a feminine appellation. I hope my future niece may not have to make such a sacrifice. may seek out from among your or our relations some well sounding as well as good name. or else let the dear little fellows be the first of the Graths that bring a handsome name into the family for their grand children to carry forward. I met with a young couple in New York suffering under similar difficulties for their poor daughter. they belong to the enormous family of Opdens, who have named for mother & grand mother, thro' so many branches, that Sarah & Mary are no longer a title by which an individual can be identified, they must have their parents name tacked to it. and yet the perplexed lady, feared it might be visited on her as a mark of disrespect to the memory of these cherished relations should she venture to deviate.

I bless you and my dear Ben, for keeping in mind your promised visit. speak of it still, and bring it as near as possible. notwithstanding your pretty simile of the untamable Pheasant I should like to see you figuring in one brightest circle of fashionable society.

for which his friends are so industriously soliciting - Ellen bids
me announce her respiration, and declares her intention of soon
appearing before you in form of a letter. poor girl she has been house keep-
ing, and house cleaning for me during my absence. and has been sick besides,
so, this time she will be able to make a very sufficient excuse - all
our sisters & brothers send you much love - they are well. Simon is
about commencing his summer's tour to his town in Penn^a - back
talks about his centre-county journey, but he loves to be at home
so much that I know he will not be long gone. he left a message of
affection to you as he passed the library door on his way to his cham-
ber. & so is waiting till I close this ere he bids good night. Adieu
my beloved Brother & sister, embrace your boys for me & believe me most
June 23rd - 1823. affectionately your unalterably attached P. G.,

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Mrs Benjamin Grath

Leaington. Ky

JUN 24 1823

Rebecca Grath