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March 12th 1826

I presume long ere this my dear sister you have
renewed your liberty and are permitted to grace your parlour
fire side - but as presuming is not more satisfactory to those
who possess the faculty, than to others for whom it is exercised
I should greatly rejoice to have ^{my} presumption in this respect
certified. it is probable the late weather has thrown some imperi-
ments in the way of punctuality. for I find even counting house
letters have not been forthcoming as usual. and therefore I have
been wise enough this time, not to fancy any thing wrong. I assure
you we are all very proud of this fourth son. and would not ex-
change him for two daughters. it would have been quite mortifying
that Mrs Povel & Kitty Cohens' boys should out-count yours. the
latter by the bye has had her fifth born a daughter. which if she does
not become too vain of. will not be any great misfortune. as she was
much in your predicament about the name and had called
every anticipation Rachel until the girl appeared - with
regard to that important matter. the heads & the fancies have
been ransacked for handsome combinations. not only the girls
but even the children have had their tastes about your sons
name. and at last have come to the conclusion that you have
mended so well in your other boys that you will after all do best
without help. Mrs Meredith insists on its being William, some of
the others would add Frederick. then have passed in succession
all the most illustrious english names - not perhaps so truly equal
as the Shandy disquisition. but resembling it in its conclusion.

and I hope my nephew will not be so threatened one of the little
his is designed to figure in the world by - as was the renowned
Frisheim.

We have had nearly a fortnight of wet weather, during which
a few returns of influenza has been introduced into the family.
Fanny & Ben Elting have been laid up nearly a week, and it has been
rather severe to our sister. She had not left her bed yesterday but
was so much better that I hope to hear of her sitting up to day -
Lydia Widdle died very unexpectedly last week after a short illness.
She was attacked by bilious cholera which resisted every medical effort
to remove it - her poor Mother is left quite alone - and has determined
to break up her household, and live with her son James who has
no family yet. Mrs Chapman has never recovered from the loss
she sustained at Long Branch, sufficiently to walk and has been con-
fined all winter - Emily was something of a belle, and it was rumoured
was going to give a great rout - when this calamity occurred in the
family - our winter gaiety has all been postponed till March this
year. The Theatre now holds out great attractions, Cooper & Miss Kelly -
the fashionables who can afford it break out into something of the spirit
of former times & I suppose anon, those who cannot afford it will be
ashamed to see their unreturned cards of invitation, and make an
effort to follow suit - Tell Ben. The renowned Panacea Swain has
bought both Moses Levy's and Wm Walrus fine houses. he is to be
our neighbors, and will convert a wing of the great house into a
cake shop! is not this too bad - worse still - the beautiful garden
& pleasure ground will be covered by small tenements - Mr. Frost
purchased the property, intending to luxuriate in all the bachelor
whims his fancy could form - he would have a boarding-housekeeper
under his own control - dine when he pleased at five or six - or even

affectionately. Tell my dearest Ben how tenderly I love him, and
how he will write again - Adieu my dear Maria, I am late for the
mail - ~~as~~ I would perhaps write or to place myself

God bless you all
and your attached Rly -

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Mrs Benjamin Graft

Leaving for Rly

Rebecca Graft

Shrewsbury April 26 1778 26