

July 23, 1826

I thank you my Dearest Mother, for your kind letter and hope your little boys are all much better and free from and fatigue. I perceive the whooping cough is indeed a severe trial for such young sufferers, and lasts so long that the nurse is almost as weary as the patient before it abates - but yours is now on the decline I have never seen the sore months your boys suffered ^{with} accompanying the disease. God grant no ill may come near you - and the lives & constitutions of the dear beauties be preserved - You have heard long ere this of the tribulations & bereavement of your friends here. I should have written to you before, but could not. One poor sister is indeed afflicted, and I could not leave her during the period of Maria's illness or for some days after her death - nor can I even now hope to send you such a letter as will afford you and my dear Ben the consolation I desire. You will feel how hard it was for one sister to part with her child - then she resigned one who had been an invalid from her birth - her youngest - she could look back on ten years of anxiety & suffering during which no day opened or the hope of amendment or closure without apprehensions of what the night might bring forth - yet she quitted too deeply, too quick - her cheerfulness had only within a few weeks visited at one house - unless called by sickness - and we began to be satisfied that she would again be happy when this most severe & unlooked for sorrow overtook us - Maria devoted her ^{last}

Year exclusively to her Mother. She sympathized with her - those to whom her accompaniment abroad, or staid at home - was ever at her side, and seemed to be most happy whilst administering to her comfort.

I do not know that she had any anticipations that she was so soon to be removed from these duties - but her sisters now recollect conversations, which then made little impression, wherein she left charges with them - if she should not live to complete her own plans - She was greatly debilitated by the heat of the weather in June, and was very thin, when first attack by the fever of which she died. She was the only person who thought it would terminate fatally, until Dr Chapman expressed his alarm on Thursday - Wednesday & Thursday held her alternately at intervals from that day - but on Saturday morning she appeared so much better. That we were all deceived she relapsed at mid-day - and then experienced no change until her pure spirit was released from its mortal tenement - her Mother never quitted her bed-side - was able to perform the last duties - to embrace the cold remains - and give directions about the closing scene - then indeed she was overwhelmed - and for many days seemed as if she could not consent to linger here - but other trials averted her - Jacob & the Dr were both indisposed - they required some exertion and the Mother was again able to look on those that were left. She is now perfectly composed has been once or twice in her parlour and takes an interest in her family - but we all feel this loss as an affliction which will long envelope our family circle with sorrow & regrets - she had qualities that were preeminently lovely and attached all her friends - such uprightness of heart - purity of mind & integrity in every action could not fail of gaining respect should it find affection - & no one ever lived more sincerely than she did her

all the girls with Sally Cohen at their head read messages of affection - our
Sisters too, desire me to add their love. Isabelle Etting whose mother has entirely
disappeared, is constantly at Mr Hays' and is able to take as much exercise as any
one, she is however very thin and has an unhealthy appearance

Tell my beloved Ben, I intended writing to him last week but as our brothers write
constantly, and I could have said nothing agreeable - took compassion on him - you
may say all the kindest & truest things that are in affectionate thoughts where
both you & the my dear Maria have a constant presence in the heart of your sister

July 28th 1826

Yours affectionately
Rebecca

Rebecca Gratz

Answered August 1826



Mrs Benjamin Gratz

Leaving for Kentucky