

Philadelphia Feb 18th 1812

We this morning parted with our dear L. again for a long time, he has commenced a long journey, which is to be succeeded by a voyage down the Mississippi to New Orleans, and then - being so far away, and in pursuit of an uncertain good, (as the smiles of fortune ever are, even to her most zealous lovers) we know not when he will return - or where he may be deceived by the intimations of the "fickle Goddess" - Never forget my dear friend, in your most pious orisons to add a hymn of thanksgiving that your happiness in this life, is not subject to the ever varying scene which is so continually turning in the magic lantern of a merchant's life - now emitting the brightest prospect of a golden harvest - and again shifting into total darkness where the least false step may plunge him into ruin -

These transient separations from your husband, you are bound as a good wife and sympathizing friend to regret, because you have the good fortune to possess the best of society in the agreeable conversation of your best friend and because you know when deprived of those charms ^{with which} you ever continue to grace the domestic fire-side, he must deplore their loss - but you are free from any further care or anxiety, which we, whose dearest interests are so often involved in dangers & hardships must endure -

Yesterday the heavy news of poor William Blodget's death arrived, and excited general and deep sorrow. You know how tenderly he was beloved, how, and how deservedly - he died at St Petersburg after a few days illness.

He went to Russia with every flattering prospect of making a rapid fortune, had established a mercantile house, and death met him on the threshold - to bear him to "where the weary are at rest" -

Charles has in business in South Carolina - his house failed, and he is gone, no one knows where! his friends are in great ~~trouble~~ lest he may have destroyed him self - Thus is poor widowed Maria "deprived of every stay (save unvarnished heaven); and her helpless little orphans shut out from every prospect but of hardship & poverty -

I am happy to contradict the accounts of general distress among the merchants of our City - which I suppose reached you through the same channel. Elisa mentioned, I have not heard of any considerable failure since the autumn. The fashionable world is not so gay as usual at this season, but the Dancing Assembly will have a Ball on the 22nd, and I have no doubt that will bring out a great many private ones. Several large families are in mourning - Frances, Willing, Rawles, Mozlans, Chews and some others in the habit of contributing to the winter gaiety, and perhaps the Richmond calamity keeps many sober minded people from the Theatre who in times past were fond of that amusement. Their causes are so obvious that even I may urge them - tho' my intercourse with society is so confined that except in the circle of my immediate friends & family I am totally ignorant of what is going on - The Merediths & Isabella do not go out at all on account of Mr. Opdens illness, and poor Mrs. Hopkinson is hanging in hopeless agony over the death bed of a darling son, a boy of nine years old - Ann is perfectly well, she walks out every day, and looks very handsome, she has promised many times to bring Mary Seton to see us but has not yet performed her promise. I was delighted with her and we ~~were~~ very anxious to become acquainted with her too. She bears a striking resemblance to her mother, and appears very cheerful & amiable.

I wrote to Elisa last week, on a fine (or as Dennis would have said) "genial" day, about her coming in the Spring and almost forgot that

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Profr. Keady

Mrs Ogden Hoffman

New York

