

Philadelphia Aug. 18th 1812.

My Dear Maria

I have not had an opportunity of addressing you before since my return, nor of telling you during my absence how continually your image was present to my mind. a thousand beautiful scenes successively rising to view, with the exhibition of good company, and constant occupation served ^{to} re-vivify my mind, and of course brought me frequently back again into former scenes of pleasure with the chosen companions of my happiest hours. we extended our journey beyond our original plan and just returned in time to greet the arrival of our Brother So. but I suppose Ben has been to see you, and communicated all the domestic concerns. I should have written by him, and requested the favour of your acquaintance for our friend Miss Myers, but feared it might put you to some trouble, as their stay will be but short, and tho' she is a charming girl, and would have pleased you, I preferred leaving to Ben the opportunity of consulting your convenience about an introduction. I indulge the hope that you may meet -

Mrs Gilaspie has just been here, and mentions that Ann has determined to pay you a visit on Saturday. she is hurried away from her present retreat by apprehensions of her children taking the Whooping cough which is introduced into the neighborhood. she is keeping them up this week to ascertain that they have not already imbibed the infection. tho' the occasion is unpleasant, I believe Ann is quite happy in the prospect of being with you so soon -

I suppose your apprehensions of war is entirely subsided, and that Eliza will return home in due time. we seem almost to have forgotten where the evil originated, in the perplexity that has ensued. the detestable outrages at Balt: shows us what our once happy & virtuous country may be brought to. - great numbers of its peace loving citizens have departed they say, never to return. and I believe no one would stay there if they were not tied down by interest. those whose property cannot be removed, must live in constant alarm. I have seen many letters expressing the state of anxiety and apprehension in which even retired & domestic families are kept. - Jack Hall dined with us yesterday, and related several - he can never return. nor is it probable that any of Harpers friends will have the temerity to trust themselves in Baltimore -

We regretted very much that your husband made such an ill-timed visit to Phil^d - he comes so seldom that we are not willing to miss him on any occasion, the girls tell me he gave fine accounts of you - and your Darlings, but I should like to hear you speak for yourself - it appears an age since we have been separated. not even a letter in six weeks - the more I travel - the greater is my desire to be near you - as I find you are a rare creature, and all things you know are to be tested by comparison - let me hear about your Fainet -

I have determined that she must be lovely - have heard she is beautiful, and shall expect very soon to find her wiser & more intelligent than other children of her age. Sally has just begun to regret that she did not accompany Mrs & party - she has gone over in her mind all the pleasure she might have enjoyed - and has the mortification to find there is not one obstacle to detain her at home. but that of having been too late in thinking of it -

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Mr Ogden Hoffman

New York