

Rebecca Gratz to Benjamin Gratz

June 16, 1845

Philadelphia June 16th. 1845

Your letter My Dearest Ben afforded me the most heartfelt pleasure, not perhaps the loss _ as it came a free will offering of affection and that it met a welcome acceptance, I can [best] prove by my prompt acknowledgment I hope you understand me too well to need any new assurance of my love, and therefore may fancy how greatly I enjoyed the good account you give me, of all your dear family, I am truly glad that Hyman's arm is so visibly recovering _ that Howard is conforming to your wishes & Bernard pursuing the course he had so long marked out for himself with so much satisfaction _ these your eldest cares, will soon be capable of realizing your parental anticipations and I sincerely hope may afford you much happiness by their respective characters and conduct _ for dear Cary there is a well grounded expectation of future excellence, in his capacity _ disposition & constitution and I trust you will have firmness enough to urge him, to embrace the present opportunity of [improving], his talents _ he must be encouraged to this by Jo Shelbys example, for the little fellow, seems to have stepped into a new field of action, and feels already that he is doing something essential for himself his last letter to Horace shewed wonderful improvement in writing, spelling & style _ and he appears so perfectly satisfied that I am sure his Mother must already be repaid for the sacrifice of feeling she made in [parting] with him _ tell her I can this day realize her sharpest pang on that occasion for My Child has gone from me! Horace left us this morning to embark on a new profession he has gone to learn the business of making Iron _ on its most [end of page]

extensive scale _ he has gone to an established where the latest improvements are in operation belonging to Col Paxton, whose son Horace is [well] acquainted with _ where he will have an opportunity of seeing & learning & studying the whole art and mystery of the business will pay his board & expect no wages, until his services commands a return _ & he thinks his knowledge of geology & [that] his past experience in his former pursuits will be of use to him _ I feel consoled at parting with him, in the full confidence his character commands _ that he will so

conduct himself, as to merit success _ his firm principles and excellent understanding will keep him in a right course, and I pray that God may guide & guard him through the perils & difficulties [of] temptations of the world _ he desired me to send his love to Ann, and say he would have written to her, but he disabled himself at the fire on Wednesday night, when the Academy of fine Arts was burned _ Horace and two of his young friends excited themselves at the peril of their lives, to save the large pictures _ and succeeded _ Wests largest picture "Death [of] the pale horse" fell upon him, fortunately not dangerously hurting him _ but his right arm was lamed and the skin taken off his hand _ so that he could not write, & they had not been five minutes out of the room, before the ceiling fell in, which would have buried them in the ruins _ poor Hyman is greatly troubled by this disaster it was indebted to him for much of its beautiful arrangement & prosperous condition, he laboured personally & interested others to get it up into a better state than it had been in for many years _ & it has fallen by the hand of an incendiary _ Hyman's health is perfectly restored & he looks well again _ we are all descending into the vale of years with as few infirmities, as nature will admit God is gracious to us, and gently leads us on to the house appointed [end of page]

to all the living _ our Sisters are both well & looking well, are active & cheerful as when you saw them last, and send you as glowing expressions of their love, as they could send in their young days _ they both wish much to see Ann, & hope you will afford them the opportunity _ our greatly beloved Brother Etting, continues much as he has been for the last six months _ much enfeebled, & wholly dependent on a good nights rest for the comfort of the day _ and rest seldom visits him uninterrupted _ when he enjoys comparative ease, he is cheerful and converses agreeably when debilitated he is still composed, and resigned, indeed expresses the hope that relief is near, he speaks of his death with perfect composure, an event that seems to be always in his thoughts, Henrys return gives him great satisfaction, and so it did us all, I gained my young companion too for he brought Sara home, after six weeks absence, the poor Child, had difficulty in leaving Becky _ tho Horace's departure urged her return she bids me send her affectionate love to you _ Lizzie Lee is in town, looking very badly she came to consult a physician who recommends her going to the sea shore, he disapproved of her taking so much exercise on horseback & driving _ and has given her prescriptions which she thinks have relieved her, she says [she] suffered much at Louisville _ I have not spoken to her about [June?]

because I find that they have given up the thoughts of going to the West this summer, he has a station at the light house at Washt. and Mrs. Blair having all her children collected or expected will not leave home _ I think she should accompany Lizzie _ for good [nursing?] may do much towards her restoration. Mr. Blair & Montgomery were here to gether _ & had their likeness's taken _ the former for the democratic review, and Sully succeeded in making a very good picture of him, of M's you will have an opportunity of judging for yourself as he has sent one (I think the best) of two that were painted your account of my dear Mary is very gratifying _ the practice of every virtue brings its own reward, by establishing it in the character and in the whole catalogue belonging to women, more is of greater value than forbearance _ "to bear & forbear" _ the two manifestations of self control _ are called the whole deity of woman _ and God knows how difficult it is to attain such perfection, considering they are the weaker vessel _ and how much occasion the Lords of creation give them to exercise it _ I am glad Mary is 'fancy free' she will I hope [end of page]

choose wisely when her time comes _ Harry Bodleys removal will not now be a loss to your family circle _ I have always regretted the [estrangement], because I like Sarah and used to find her so much in your house, Is a [diminution?] of fortune the cause of Mr. Vertners desire to sell his house? it seems a pity for old people to diminish their comforts, for the sake of young ones, who can afford to rough it for a few years, rather than deprive those who have passed through that ordeal, and arrived at ease or luxury [through] it _ that good old [Man], with all his kindly feelings ought to enjoy his station. he has done so much for his wifes relations _

Jac has been absent a fortnight, and will probably be away a week longer _ on his return I think Jo will certainly commence

his journey to Lexington he talks of it with great interest, & I anticipate much pleasure in it for [him] _ thank you dear Brother, for the kindness of your expressions to me, I think of last summer with so much pleasure & love for you all, that I should think little trouble of the journey, to renew it _ when other circumstances admit of my paying you a visit, but I must not be too prodigal of enjoyments, when duties interfere _ Kiss my darling Miriam for me _ I should indeed love to see her sweet face again _ give my love to dear Ann, and all my beloved boys & Mary. remember me too to Mrs. Thrashley & my other friends

God Bless you My dear Ben, [all] here
desire their Affectionate love, [believe]
me most truly & devotedly your Sister

RG.

Unknown to Benjamin Gratz

I have recd. yr. _ Lou [...] _ 80 _ N _ 92 ½ _ I hope to [be?] [...] you before the
end of the month _

[Address:]
Benjamin Gratz Esqr.
Lexington Ky.

[Endorsement:]
Rebecca Gratz
17 June 1845
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[10?] Augt And.