

**Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz**

**July 15, 1822**

I have it on my conscience My dear Maria that I have never written a letter to my dear Brother Benj since he left us; and when he plead for a domestic letter from brother Jo, and accused himself as having not deserv'd one from me, (never having asked for one) it was my determination to write to him immediately \_ but on second thoughts I still defer it, hoping thereby to draw him to write \_ while I can indulge myself in telling you (confidentially) my policy, and satisfy my desire of conversing with him thro' you. and at the same time pay a just debt \_ but if I fail in making you sensible how delightful your letters are to me. it must be wholly my want of skill in portraying my feelings for I assure you they never fail to create such a sensation \_ first at home, and then thro' the different houses of the family including town & country members. and no where more strongly expressed than by our good old Aunt Bell \_ if my memory could retain the verbal messages delivered on the occasion, I might send you love-tells, of as much variety as the laughs at Capt. Phillips' in the highlands, recorded in the Salmagundi \_ but even then, they would be imperfect, for they generally introduce some affectionate reminiscence (as Mr. Walsh calls it) of your husband, and then we have dear [Ben], from his childhood upwards, "and gentle sighs, and moist eyes glisten" that ye are so far awa \_ Our citizens are now flocking to Long-branch and remind me how pleasantly we enjoyed the last season there. Mrs. [Gillaspie] wishes me to join her party but I shall not leave house this summer unless it be to [end of page]

accompany Hyman where ever his Physician may send him \_ a little imprudence in diet or exposure has brought back his rheumatism to a violent degree in his limbs \_ he has again resorted to mercury. and suffers a good deal \_ with his usual philosophy. Simon left home this morning for Lancaster \_ we hope to finish a long business now before Arbitrators. he was there three weeks in the last month, and [adjourned] for a fortnight during which time he came home, had a severe fit of the gout \_ and with the marks of recent cups on his temples, gone to resume the fight. tell Ben he must have, by mistake left a little of his Law eloquence at Willington which his brother is making use of, they say, very much to the purpose at Lancaster \_ I delivered your messages to Louisa & Caroline they were much gratified by your remembrance, and I requested them to answer your questions themselves,

but as they have not; may say for them, that they are well, and pass their time pretty much as usual, Louisa is taking lessons in oil painting which she is very fond of. I lament their total reclusion from society which deprives them of many resources. [which] an enlargement of ideas resulting from intercourse with the world would afford, the Myers from Norfolk passed a few days with me, on their way to Canada, and went out with me to see them, I am delighted when an opportunity occurs of introducing them to any of my friends \_ which from the limited patronage they receive in the family, is all that is in my power \_

The Hunts staid but a short time in the city but I suppose they will soon return Theodosia went to visit New York and her mother to Trenton, I was surprised to see Dr. Caldwell, apparently very attentive to Theodosia, and well renewed by her \_ on a visit I paid them one evening while they were in town, she does not visit the sins of the wife on the husband \_ but it gave me an impression, that there was more insensibility on a most delicate subject \_ than charity in such conduct \_ [end of page]

I suppose the marriage of young Caldwell will not make the family more popular in Kentucky. his conduct is a striking contrast to Mr. Muhlenburghs in Lancaster, who having gained the ear of a willing damsel. still preaches the duties of filial obedience against his own wishes. and avoids an intercourse which would lead his fair mistress & himself into the temptation of fruitless wishes. do you not think such conduct calculated to rivet her chains and subdue the old mans obduracy? Miss Coleman is the prize in question \_ I have teased our niece Rosa on her power with the western apollo. but she [denies] all knowledge of it \_ the three girls entered into a conspiracy against you immediately on reading my letter, and resolved their own hands & seals should exonerate you from past offence trusting your justice or ingenuity would provide for the future \_

Gratz Etting is still with us, and an invalid, but his disease is gradually subsiding \_ and he will probably be able to return home early in the autumn. There is nothing new in the literary world of any consequence, except the Fortunes of [Nigel] and we are only promised that \_ Mr. Walsh keeps [you] informed of what is talked of here \_ 4th. of July orations are pouring in upon us. Ellen received one from the south [...] her humble Lt. C. C. Lee, who is said to be a great [orator?] [...] always judge of the effect on such popular [occasions?] [reading?] the composition, else I should not bestow much praise on [his?] having recently seen Mr. Websters celebrated one, on another national subject.

I am vexed with the critics who condemn Bracebridge-hall. I hope you have seen and like it \_ the English reviewers are more favorable than ours. but they are accustomed to pay five dollars for a worke which our republican book sellers generally furnish cheaper \_ and this is a deadly sin in the Author, that his agents are trying to make money

on this side the water \_ I have written a whole letter, without saying one word about my darling Gratz or any of his dear little cousins who constantly bring him before my minds eye. never the less my dear Sister he is quite as much the delight of my heart as if he stood in every line. and I long to see him, and caress his sweet good humoured face \_ pray let me know whether he begins to talk \_ or has any prospect of getting his nose put out of joint \_ as sometimes happen to youths of his age \_  
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Horace [...] as ever, and must be a philosopher. he views the danger with so much indifference \_ you are so kind, my dear Maria in esteeming the journey light which must bring you to us that I have dared to hope you might be induced to spend the winter in Phila. you can come on a little earlier than you left us last year, so as not to miss the river full of water. and if it is in the power of woman to make you happy here \_ and my dear Ben will bring you and your son. what shall prevent our having such a winter together, as I have not passed since the days of my Youth? all our sisters & brothers join in affectionate love, and subscribe to the above request and tell Ben a phalanx of old friends will hail him, and unite to give him welcome \_  
Adieu dearest, embrace my Brother & his son for me, and believe me  
their & your most ardently attached RG \_

July 14th. 1822

[Address:]  
Mrs. Benjamin Gratz  
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[Endorsement:]  
Rebecca Gratz  
July 15. 1822