

**Rebecca Gratz and Maria Gist Gratz**

**December 13, 1824**

Your letter My dear Sister, was gratefully received. the sympathy of those we love soothe our sorrows \_ and when we must weep we are grateful for the tears which mingle with our own, from hearts which bear a part of our grief. and consecrate the virtues of those we mourn \_ I have endeavoured to write to you my dear Maria before this but could not for all my thoughts & feelings were unutterable. would that Your dear family were with us \_ I long to see my dear Brother and Sister & [their] lovely boys \_ separation is doubly severe when such visitations occur \_ we talk of you every day little Horace has heard so much of [Tony?] that he seems to think of him incessantly, repeats every day that he is coming over the mountains to see us in the Spring \_ and all his infantile projects of pleasure & instruction are associated with little Ben Gratz as he styles him \_ you may suppose my dear Sister, that these precious children are the objects of my constant and tenderest concern \_ they have given me a deep interest in life \_ which the many & severe trials it has pleased Heaven to visit upon me, might otherwise have made a weary pilgrimage \_ but I dare not complain \_ and feel that I ought not whilst so many beloved friends are left and so many important duties still remain to be done \_ poor Isabella Etting is suffering under the [end of page]

most afflicting disease I ever witnessed \_ every day for nearly three months she has appeared as if in the agonies of death \_ her spasms are such struggles as parting nature seems to yield to \_ and for the first month her physicians daily spoke so discouragingly of her situation that those who were not in her chamber dreaded every messenger might be coming to announce her departure \_ for a single week she was better. but again she is reduced to the same state. and her poor Mother is almost worn out with anxiety & fatigue \_ our Brother Simon has also been confined with another of those bilis which gave us so much alarm last spring \_ it was not seated in so vital a part as the former. and he has suffered less. but still is at home in consequence however he is recovered from it, thank God!

we have been alarmed by the Small pox throughout the city and have by the advice of our Physicians had all

the children re-vaccinated \_ as the disease is much lightend  
by that measure \_ in the early history of vaccination, very  
little attention was paid to the character of the disease  
and a spurious or partial disease was frequently  
introduced which is no protection against small-pox \_ in  
our family, one out of the seven has now the genuine  
disease which is a proof that she had it not in the first  
instance \_ Dr. Hays performed the operation. and by the bye  
he told us, that he found among his papers one marked  
with your son's name inclosing the scab of a genuine  
vaccination so you need have no apprehensions on the subject  
should the disease appear at Lexington \_  
[end of page]

I beg you My dear Maria to write me when you have  
leisure \_ our dear Ben's letters contain so little of domes-  
-tic news that even when I have the happiness of recog-  
-nizing his hand writing and the affectionate salutation of  
continued remembrance with a word assuring of your health  
I feel the more desirous of further communication \_ I trust  
you still cherish the design of visiting us in the spring \_ should  
it please Heaven to continue to us the blessings we still  
possess \_ for alas from the suddenness of our recent affliction  
I fear to look forward with too earnest a desire to any  
earthly good \_

Our dear Sisters & brothers send you their  
affectionate love \_ the girls [also] beg you will [ac...]  
[...] they are lovely interesting companions \_ Miriam [...]  
[...] well, grief & confinement affected her health  
very naturally. but thank god she is better \_ and the  
rest all well \_ embrace My dear Ben & your lovely  
boys for me and believe me My dear Sister most truly  
your Affectionate RG

Decr. 13th.

[Address:]  
Mrs. Benjamin Gratz  
Lexington Ky

[Endorsement:]  
Rebecca Gratz  
Answered Feb 22nd. 1825