

**Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz**

**March 12, 1826**

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I presume long ere this My dear Sister you have recovered your liberty and are permitted to grace your parlour fire-side \_ but as presuming is not more satisfactory to those who possess the faculty, than to others for whom it is exercised I should greatly rejoice to have my presumption in this respect certified \_ it is probable the late weather has thrown some impediments in the way of punctuality \_ for I find even counting house letters have not been forthcoming as usual \_ and therefore I have been wise enough this time, not to fancy any thing wrong \_ I assure you we are all very proud of this fourth son and would not exchange him for two daughters \_ it would have been quite mortifying that Mrs. Powel and Kitty Cohens' boys should out-count yours \_ the latter by the bye has had her fifth born a daughter \_ which if she does not become too vain of \_ will not be any great misfortune. as she was much in your predicament about the name and had called every anticipation Rachel until the girl appeared \_ with regard to that important matter \_ the heads & the fancies have been [ransacked] for handsome combinations \_ not only the girls but even the children have had their tastes about your sons name, and at last have come to the conclusion that you have succeeded so well in your other boys that you will after all do best without help \_ Mrs. Meredith insists on its being William, some of the others would add Frederick \_ then have passed in succession all the most illustrious english names \_ not perhaps as wisely argued as the Shandy disquisition \_ but resembling it in its conclusion \_  
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and I hope my nephew will not be so blundered out of the title [he is] designed to figure in the world by \_ as was the renowned Tristram \_

We have had nearly a fortnight of wet weather. during which a few returns of influenza has been introduced into the family Fanny & Ben Etting have been confined nearly a week and it has been rather severe to our sister \_ she had not left her bed yesterday but was so much better that I hope to hear of her sitting up to day \_ Lydia Biddle died very unexpectedly last week after a short illness she was attacked by bilious cholic which resisted every medical effort

to remove it \_ her poor Mother is left quite alone \_ and has determined to break up her household and live with her son James \_ who has no family yet \_ Mrs. Chapman has never recovered from the hurt she received at long branch, sufficiently to walk and has been confined all winter \_ Emily was something of a belle. and it was rumoured was going to give a great route \_ when this calamity occurred in the family \_ our winter gaiety has all been postponed till March this year. the Theatre now holds out great attractions Cooper & Miss Kelly \_ the fashionables \_ who can afford it break out into something of the spirit of former times & I suppose anon. those who cannot afford it will be ashamed to see their unreturned cards of invitation \_ and make an effort to follow suit \_ Tell Ben \_ the renowned Panacea Swaim has bought both Moses Levy's and Wm. Walns fine houses. he is to be our neighbour \_ and will convert a wing of the great house into a cake shop! is not this too bad \_ worse still \_ the beautiful garden & pleasure ground will be covered by small tenements \_ Mr. Short purchased the property intending to luxuriate in all the bachelor whims his fancy could form \_ he would have a boarding-housekeeper under his own controll \_ dine when he pleased at five or six \_ or even [end of page]

if he pleased (as Tremaine did in the country) at 7 \_ what other whim-whams were in his embrio arrangements did not transpire \_ but lo! the housekeeper was not to be obtained without some difficulty and Mr. Short does not luxuriate on difficulties \_ so he cut the matter short \_ and found Swaims purse a panacea for this new disease. What a pity he had not sought a wife to keep house for him \_ it might have tormented two people \_ but then it would have been much more agreeable to the neighbourhood \_ and much [prettier] for Chesnut Street \_ my children are well. and talk of yours from morning till night \_ Horace is determined to write a letter to Gratz on his birth day \_ he will write a long letter full and if he cannot do more with his own hand he can certainly sign his name \_ he has [~~already~~] a great deal to tell Gratz \_ and Bernard & dear little Howard already and he will have a great deal more to say [next?] [months] \_ he wants to learn his multiplication table quite thro' before he writes tho'. for he is afraid as Gratz goes to school. and was bigger than him, when he was here. that he will beat him in learning. he wants to know too if Gratz has been riding on Kate since he got home \_ if he can shoot his arrows straight and knows any new plays to teach him when they meet again \_ now Maria, if you do not give me some of your boys' talk I shall think you too proud to descend, or that you are ashamed of my folly \_ but indeed I love children \_ & childrens talk. their own words expressing their own thoughts

goes quicker to my heart. than any thing much wiser that is said for them  
Jack mimitates Bernards voice and his expression \_ “Old man what are  
we going to have” \_ after dinner to the great delight of the table \_ old & young \_  
and then comes all that the little ones remember of their cousins. Uncle  
Ben & Aunt Maria, are the loved theme of each delighted talker \_ till we  
live over every scene of the last happy summer \_ Dear, Dear Maria \_  
if you knew how we all love you. you would think of returning again  
and again. [without] fear of the journey \_ every body here embrace you  
[end of page]

affectionately. Tell My dearest Ben how tenderly I love him, and  
beg he will [write?] again \_ Adieu My dear Maria, I am late for the  
mail \_ [or?] should perhaps scribble on to please myself  
God Bless you all  
ever Your attached RG\_

[Address:]

To

Mrs.Benjamin Gratz

Lexington Ky

[Endorsement:]

Answered April 26th. 1826

Rebecca Gratz