

**Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz**

**October 12, [1832]**

A new novel and an opportunity to send it \_ then "Westward ho!" shall hie to thee My dear Maria, before a critic has the chance to forestall your relish, and taking for granted that our old favorite will not be less agreeable when he aspires to entertain you in your own regions I hope he will meet with a kind reception. and brighten the hours you devote to his labours. I have been reading Miss Martineaus tales \_ or illustrations of political economy, and should be very glad to send you a copy. but find they are not to be had they came out in numbers. and but few copies have been sent to subscribers \_ but suppose they will be more common when better known in America, for they would be useful to young readers, and make a dry subject very easily understood, and quite interesting I was introduced yesterday to a boy whom I could have hugged for being so like our dear Bernard, but he was smaller and 12 Yrs old \_ he was so affectionate, and watchful of his father that I fancied his heart was as much like your sons as his face \_ poor little fellow he & his father were saved from a wreck \_ in which his Mother and two younger children perished \_ and they passed through this city in their way home over land \_ fearful of again trusting the element that had been so fatal to their happiness \_

Henry Etting returned last evening in very good health and the decision of the court in his favor, has set his mothers heart at rest \_ we were all much interested and as no mischief [was] done to the wounded man \_ greeted Henry with much joy \_ Gratz was at home to receive him \_ and Isabella able to bid him welcome \_  
[end of page]

But Ellen is gone again \_ her husband found he could not settle his business to his satisfaction in Baltre. and was obliged to relinquish his establishment here \_ he broke up housekeeping \_ sold his furniture and has taken his wife and child home to his fathers \_ this for the present is an act of necessity \_ Ellen will return here in december, to be confined at her Mothers \_ and then should Sam be extricated from his difficulties he will determine where to work for his living. Richea has suffered greatly in all these changes \_ but she knows too well, the chances & cares

of life to which the duty of a wife must yield  
to murmur at her daughters' fate. and we know  
that an affectionate home will be afforded by her  
relatives in Baltimore \_ until better times may restore  
her to a domicil of her own \_ I took courage about a  
fortnight ago and went up to see Aunt Bell \_ for  
four months I had not been at her house, and wonderful  
to relate every member of the family received me kindly \_  
it was more than I deserved, as it regarded the old Lady \_  
but when I was sick they visited me not \_ and if I met any  
of my cousins in the street they passed me by without speaking  
so I hardened myself and kept away \_ but when the  
seasons changed, and I thought of commencing another  
Year without asking a blessing \_ or giving good wishes to  
the ancient sister of my parent \_ my pride gave way \_  
and I determined to humble my self and seek forgiveness \_  
poor old Lady \_ she is feeble & helpless \_ she cannot walk  
from the effect of her fall, and looks so stricken \_ so doubly  
stricken with old age \_ & poverty \_ that my heart melted into  
[end of page]

sorrow \_ Is long life a blessing \_ when thus left bare of  
the comforts that infirmities make actual wants? she  
is cheerful, and her daughters are devoted to her; their  
whole occupation is to attend to her \_ and she is conscious  
that her presence makes them happy. she asked a thousand  
questions about you & Ben \_ and expressed so much sym-  
-pathy for Ellen, that I was too grateful to stay long away  
and walk now a mile & half to visit her with as much  
ease as I used to go to Broad street \_ our Brothers are  
all well and our nieces send love, and other messages  
if I could but make them short enough for my letter.  
but I am in great haste \_ and must close my letter  
in order to go and hunt for a cook, for alas! What  
can compensate for an ill cooked dinner to a set of hungry  
men! and I have been so lectured into punctuality \_ that  
I tremble for the whole discipline of the kitchen to be under gone  
with a new candidate \_ Tell Ben, Philadelphia has [done?]  
wonders at the Election on Tuesday \_ the Anti-Jacksons are triumph-  
-ant \_ and Jo bids me say. there is great probability \_ nay almost  
a certainty \_ that Pennsylvania will give an AntiJackson vote \_  
they are all up & doing here \_ Hyman was as busy with ward  
& general Elections, as he could be \_ I believe Mr. C\_ has not a  
warmer friend \_ they wanted to send Jac to the Legislature \_ but he  
refused to stand as a candidate \_ I was very sorry \_ for I want him to  
get some employment that would interest him and I think  
from his knowledge of state politics \_ and state interests that he  
would have been a very useful member \_ I wish our brothers

had a little more public spirit \_ or at least would take some of the burdens of public affairs on them selves \_ they have time enough to spare \_ and spite of all experience, [if] I were a man, I would like to have some share in public concerns \_ that is if I had money enough to be sure that I did not seek honors for the lucre of gain! \_  
[end of page]

God Bless you dearest Sister, I think of you \_ and pray for you daily. embrace all your darlings for me \_ tell the boys they need never forget us \_ Horace goes to Mr. Sanderson's school again \_ and is quite happy \_ Sarah has taken a long holiday \_ all her companions have left school, and the classes have not formed, as cholera took a great many away who have not yet returned she recommences in a week more \_ Mr. Furness & Mrs. Sully enquired for you when I saw them a few days ago \_ poor Mrs. Huntt is sadly changed \_ since the loss of her daughter. Isabella begs her best love \_ Adieu my dear Maria, tell Ben I hope we shall hear from him soon \_ ever your & his affectionate

RG

12th. Oct \_

Tomorrow we celebrate the anniversary of Ben & Harriets marriage \_ at their own house \_ they are very hospitable, and popular in the family

[Address:]

To

Mrs. Benjamin Gratz  
Lexington Kentucky

[Editors' Note: The year of this letter is based on the publication date of *Westward Ho! A Tale* by James Kirke Paulding and an election year, both in 1832.]