

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Gist Gratz

February 19, [1826]

Feb: 19th. _

you are so continually the theme of conversation in our little family circles My dear Maria, that altho' you are so far away, we feel the influence of last summers charming visit _ the girls are forever recollecting something you said _ or something you did to [heighten] the enjoyment of each passing hour _ and all they now do _ whether it be to work or [reading], or play calls up reminiscences of Aunt Maria _ we have just been reading Coopers last novel _ and are sure you will enjoy as much pleasure in its perusal as we have _ it is so delightfully picturesque and so finely descriptive of indian manners & character _ then our old favorite Leather stocking _ with his youthful name & characteristics Hawk-eye figures away in bold relief in every page _ but I will not anticipate your pleasure _ I heard our brother Jac enquiring for an opportunity to send it to you _ and I hope you will receive it before the [ene...tating] influenza which seems to be striding over all the country this side of the Mountains _ reaches your west-ern hemisphere _ as it has resided so long in cities perhaps it has not the indian sagacity [in] trailing and may not find you out _ for which you may thank your stars _ and indeed My poor Sister, as you have other perils to encounter in the flesh. I pray you may be exempt _ now if any one can bear the labour & toil of a nursery with patience I think that person should be your self _ for your rewards are great and multiplied _ such three sons as yours. any mother may delight in should your daughters be as beautiful _ but no you will not be vain _ for you have borne your blushing [end of page]

honors so meekly _ that the gratification of your hearts desire will only make you more grateful _ pray My dear if you are well enough to write comfortably let me [have] the satisfaction of receiving a few lines from you _ all about your self and children _ our dear Ben never addresses me except in the moment of haste & joy _ and then he is so agitated, that he can only tell me what you have given him _ now you know [what] tender fellow-feeling women have for their sister sufferers _ and remember too that it is almost three months since you have written _

Phila. continues dull notwithstanding all the efforts made to the contrary _ breaking merchants & bad markets are the [perma]-nent subjects of conversation _ our fashionables are half in

mourning _ and the rest are trying the experiment of a domes-
-tic winter. we hear now & then of a matrimonial engagement _
or a birth or some such natural occurrence _ but every thing
as My Lady Grace would say _ soberly _ Mrs. Jo Norris has a son _
& Elizabeth Fisher smiles on Mr. Read _ there has been a great
noise about Kean the Actor _ for about a week he played
to an Audiance of men _ but at last (to the shame of our Ladies)
some would go _ and the impudent fellow triumphed _
Miss Kelly has succeeded him _ and been universally well
received. by the time Lent is over I suppose our winter will
be commencing _ our friend Mrs. Meredith has been a good deal
out of health [she] has rarely been able to take exercise
and this is a serious disadvantage to her _ [a few] agreeable
books have done much to brighten this dull town tho' _ and
you will find among them some that are highly interesting
for they all find their way to your reading city _
[end of page]

February 20, [1826]

Feb: 20

God Bless You, My Dearest Maria _ your letter has reached us _ and
filled our hearts with joy and gratitude _ you would have enjoyed
the effects of your extraordinary kindness had you witnessed the
surprise and delight which appeared on every countenance at
the perusal of your letter _ Hyman doubted whether he had read it
rightly _ but his pale face flushed _ and his eyes sparkled _ Jo [hazza'd?]
and burst out in his usual exclamation on the qualities of his Sister
whom he praised with all his heart. "she had no nonsense about her" _
and as to Jac _ I do not believe I can tell you all he said _ but You &
your sons are the theme of his constant praise _ and this last act of
heroism has quite won him _ indeed I do not believe a new nephew
was an object of as much pride as the affectionate condescension
of his Sisters telling the joyful news _ I trust my dear Sister [you?]
continue well _ and every day become stronger _ I sympathize [with?]
your sister Boswell _ & hope this new object of interest will win her
from her [sorrow] _ I suppose your Mother is with you _ kiss & [congratulate]
her for [me] and embrace My dear Ben for me _ his happiness
is ever [near] my heart. how I should love to see you all _ the
children are wild with glee on the occasion, Sarah says she will
have two of your sons, Gratz is her first favorite _ and the youngest
she shall delight to nurse _ the Girls all send tenderest love _
Mr. Moses beg you will accept his _ we are all well again _ even
Hyman has suffered less within the last week. he & Jo have gone
to the Theatre this evening to see Miss Kelly _ I commenced writing this
letter on Saturday Eveng & was interrupted _ yesterday the fine weather

induced our Sisters to go with me to Willington where Simon is confined
with the Gout _ and now _ tho' I know it is not worth perusing I have
not the power to write another _ for all I can say is but a repetition of
how happy & how grateful I feel that your hour of peril is so
safely past and you so blesst _ adieu My belov'd Sister may all
a Mother can desire bless you in your darling children _ embrace them
for their Aunt. and say to my brother how tenderly I am his & Your own RG _

[Address:]

To

Mrs. Benjamin Gratz

Lexington K_y _

[Editors' Note: The year of this letter is determined by the birth of Maria Gist Gratz's youngest son, Cary, who was born on February 6, 1826.]