

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Fenno Hoffman

February 5, 1806

Philadelphia Feb. 5th. 1806

My Dear Maria

I have just returned from Mrs. Merediths, where I spent a very pleasant day. and feel that the evening could not be so happily employed in any other way. as in devoting it to my dearest, best of friends _ your letter arrived this morning for which I most gratefully thank you, [your] kind expressions of solicitude & friendship are impressed on my heart. and at the same time that I beg you will banish all anxiety concerning my health. I cannot conceal the pleasing sensation. that tender interest excites. My Maria, I am very well! and I hope when we meet, to make a suitable return for all your goodness. you know how much I wish to see you, and may expect me to embrace the first opportunity of visiting you, that is offered to my choice. at this period I am particularly anxious to be with you, and pray that the protection [of] heaven may be extended to you and all happiness with speedy restoration to health.

I am astonished to hear that Ann complains of Madame Grelaud they appear on excellent terms, and she is at present very indulgent respecting their expenses I do not know how far she restricts them, about Christmas time Matilda mentioned to me that she was so badly off for frocks that she could not manage to have one clean for Sundays. as she has out grown all her old ones _ I then purchased three new ones for her, and had one or two of her old ones fitted up & lengthened. I also got her a velvet spencer and some other trifles amounting to about Thirty Dollars _ as she said Madame G_ would not give her any thing and she was tired of repeated applications. since that time she has not required [end of page]

any thing but [the] pair of dancing shoes _

Anns want of shoes must be occasion'd by her negligence and Mr. [B...atnall?] tardiness. she has a pair of cork soles but her feet are so tender that it is painful to wear them, and she has I fear made them worse by walking out in [kid?]. however they are not very bad, and she can walk & dance with her usual activity. They had an examination on [Wedn] Monday. when they performed a little French comedie, before some professors and, I hear Ann & Matilda acquitted themselves with great credit to themselves & teacher, Mr. Dennie told me to day his next PortFolio would contain an article of commendation written by a Gentleman & Scholar who was present. Madame G_ also informs me that Matilda makes great progress in english and every branch of education _ her embroidery I think equal to any I have ever seen. and from her account Mr. H_ will be compensated for the anxiety of this long separation from his daughter, by the improvement she has made _

And now my dear Girl I must tell the liberty I have taken with you and the consequences _ your Journal _ which I have so often perused with delight, I was induced to shew to our friend Mrs. Meredith, which having read aloud to Mr. D_ gained you not only all the praise that elegant & chaste composition merits, but has produced a request [for] some extracts to be published in the PortFolio _ Mrs. M_ begged me to ask your permission _ which I do from her _ at the same time assuring you, it was only to her private perusal I committed it and that I do not urge your compliance, tho I think it worthy of preservation; and that your descriptions of the country would be a [end of page]

very valuable communication for that miscellany _

What is the reason Eliza does not write? give my love to her and say I have been several times disappointed _ I wait further orders about Miss Ogdens shoes, remember me affectionately to her, and to my dear Harriet _ whose silence I have also lamented for many weeks, I shall write to her soon, and shall be most happy to receive a letter _

My Mother & the girls send you their affectionate love _ be convinced my dear Maria of my perfect health. and do not let an idea of me obtrude that can give you pain _ Your Girls are well, and seem quite satisfied & happy _ Charles Nicholas has lost his heart with Ann, and is her humble servant on Sundays _ and she graciously smiles on his weekly [dev...?] Matilda is a great pet [ofth] her cousin Merediths _

God Bless you my dear friend, believe [my?] constant affection, and [that I am] always happy when you can employ me in your service, ever Your own

Rebecca

[Address:]

Mrs. Ogden Hoffman
No 66 Greenwich Street
New York