

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Fenno Hoffman

August 18, 1812

Philadelphia Aug: 18th. 1812.

My dear Maria

I have not had an opportunity of addressing you before since my return, nor of telling you during my absence how continually your [image] was present to my mind _ a thousand beautiful scenes successively rising to view, with the exhilaration of good company, and constant occupation seemed to re-vivify my mind, and of course brought me frequently back again into former scenes of pleasure with the chosen companions of my happiest hours _ we extended our journey beyond our original plan _ and just returned in time to greet the arrival of our Brother Jo _ but I suppose Ben has been to see you, and communicated all the domestic concerns, I should have written by him, and requested the favour of your acquaintance for one friend Miss Myers, but feared it might put you to some trouble, as their stay will be but short, and tho' she is a charming girl, and would have pleased you, I preferred leaving to Ben the opportunity of consulting your convenience about an introduction _ I indulge the hope that you may meet _

Mrs. Gillaspie has just been here and mentions that Ann has determined to pay you a visit on Saturday. she is hurried away from her present retreat by apprehensions of her children taking the Whooping cough which is introduced into the neighborhood _ she is keeping them up this week to ascertain that they have not already imbibed the infection tho' the occasion is unpleasant, I believe Ann is quite happy in the prospect of being with you so soon _
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I suppose your apprehensions of war is entirely subsided, and that Eliza will return home in due time _ we seem almost to have forgotten where the evil originated, in the perplexity that has ensued _ the detestable outrages at Balt: shews us what our once happy & virtuous country may be brought to _ great numbers of its peace loving citizens have departed they say, never to return. and I believe no one would stay there if they were not tied down by interest _ those whose property cannot be removed, must live in constant alarm, I have seen many letters expressing the state of anxiety and apprehension in which even retired & domestic families are kept _ Jack Hall dined with us yesterday, and related [...al?] _ he can never return, nor is it probable that any of Hansons friends will have the temerity to trust them selves in Baltimore _

We regretted very much that your husband made such an ill-timed visit to Phila. he comes so seldom that we are not willing to miss him on any occasion, the girls tell me he gave fine accounts of you _ and your darlings, but I should like to hear you speak for your self _ it appears an age since we have been separated _ not even a letter in six

weeks _ the more I travel _ the greater is my desire to be near you _
as I find you are a rare creature, and all things you know are
to be tested by comparison _ let me hear about your Harriet _
I have determined that she must be lovely _ have heard she is beau-
tiful, and shall expect very soon to find she evinces more intelli-
gence than other children of her age, Sally has just begun to regret
that she did not accompany Ben & party _ she has gone over in her
mind all the pleasure she might have enjoyed _ and has the mortifi-
cation to find, there is not one obstacle to detain her at home but that
of having been too late in thinking of it _
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our friend Mrs. Meredith is well and reconciled to the severe affliction with
which she has been visited _ her little Ann is quite sick, but not dangerously
so, she thinks it worms and is applying the remedy _ but unfortunately one
of Mrs. Hawthorns children has the Measles, and as they have been all together
there is some probability of her taking that disease _ I can scarcely imagine
a more forlorn situation than this poor womans _ with a family of nine
children she embarks [in] daily expectation of lying-in _ and [has] not
the means of procuring either comfortable accommodation or assistance,
if she survives the voyage _ and all its difficulties _ it is to be in a foreign
land cast on the bounty of strangers _ a dependence of all other _ the most
humiliating and painful _ But God, who tempers the wind &c provides
a [temper] of mind also, befitting the station in which it is to be employed
and will no doubt raise her up friends where it is her destiny [t...?]
them _ there was an awful accident occurred here, a few days [ago]
you may have seen recorded _ in the Death of Mrs. Henley _ she was [thrown?]
from a Gig and killed on the spot _ has left a large family among
the most helpless of which is an infant three months old _ she was a
very fine woman, untimely cut off in the midst of her usefulness _

Sally & Rachel send you their best love _ Richea has been quite sick _ and
is still much debilitated _ remember me affectionately to Mr. Hoffman
and embrace the dear children for me _ How is your friend Mrs. Allen?

Adieu My dear friend, I have scribbled you a stupid letter
in spite of many interruptions, which I find rather tended to increase
the evil, for every one has brought me in to thicker gloom than
before. and so you must receive it _ God Bless you _ and guard you
securely & well with all your treasures _ believe me most affectionately
your friend RG _

[Address:]
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