

Rebecca Gratz to Maria Fenno Hoffman

November 29, [1818]

I went yesterday to see Ann, My dear Maria, that I might give you the latest intelligence of her, and she assured me the pain in her side was gone, and that she is quite well again, she was complaining of her frequent disappointments respecting Emmas arrival. and was still expecting her last night notwithstanding the very unpromising appearance of the weather, she says even the people at the stage office smile when she sends her nightly enquiries whether Mr. & Miss Seton have arrived. so I expect they will be greeted with a general salutation when they come at last and have their names announced by as long a string of attendance as a visitor at an English drawing room on Gala night _

Ann looks better, and is more cheerful. she & Charles are both very much attached to little Emma, and seem to take great delight in her, she is of an amusing age _ begins to speak plain, & Ann is teaching her a string of nursery verses. which she repeats very prettily. this maternal occupation fills up the time she must pass at home alone, and ones heart grows so much more interested the more they are thus employed that she will no longer find her hours heavy. Mr. N. received a letter from Your Husband, mentioning that you were again unwell, I hope you are not tardy to seek advice when any of those symptoms appear which have recently given you so much suffering. do not again my dear friend, suffer a whole day, when reasonable remedies may provide earlier relief.
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By this time I suppose you have parted with Edward, and after the pain of parting is over, you will become reconciled to the event which seems to offer much advantages to him, I used to lament over his situation every time I saw him last summer, he seemed to be toiling so hard for the benefit of others, while the flower of his days were passing without the promise of such fruit as his labours were gathering [for] and should be laying up for him self. the winter climate of N. Orleans is excellent, and may establish him in better health than he would have in N. York. and by avoiding a few weeks in the summer & Autumn, all danger of residence there will be overcome. We have heard from Ben at Lexington _ tho' he did not intend going to New Orleans when he left home, I should not be surprised if he extended his journey that far,

Ellen Hays left me on Thursday to make a visit to our relations in Baltimore. Mr. Etting & his daughter Kitty passed a few days here, and prevailed on her mother to let her go home with them. she means to stay about a month. her sister Maria takes her place with me, and tho Ellen was so great a favorite with

you, I think you would like her quite as well _ the unfortunate attack which seemed to blight her prospects _ has changed without injuring her character, it has made her more serious _ and retired broke down the flow of youthful spirits _ and put a stop to the cultivation of her talents _ but she has been gradually recovering from these effects _ and tho' her face is still disfigured by it _ she has lost the painful consciousness of it. which for so long a time disturbed her mind _ she is an affectionate, amiable girl with a very sound understanding, tho so much animation as Ellen _

I have promised Jo to go & see Mrs. Andrew Hamilton, they
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have taken lodgings in Market Street _ and what is rather strange she has been very little visited _ even by the friends of the family. Mrs. Harrison, who visits at the house most intimately has not called on her _ Mary Lyle left the Woodlands the day after her Marriage & spent a week at Bristol which gave rise to a great many animadversions and jokes _ she then return'd and set up for company. the settlements &c are another cause of observation _ every thing _ principal & interest being secured & doubly secured from her husband. even the privilege of borrowing on good security is provided against _ Mr. L has been true to his calling on this occasion

Give my love to your husband _ and children, I hope they will all continue to enjoy health this winter, and that your domestic comfort will continue uninterrupt'd. let me hear from you soon, My dear friend, and if possible tell me you are [well?] again. I wish you could see our little darling Sarah, she is [the] prettiest infant Rachel has ever had. and so good & intelligent that she is the admiration of all the family _ they all send a deal of love to you _ & yours, and pray that many happy & healthful days may yet be numbered in your years. ere you are called to that blissful abode, where your virtues have secured you a crown of Glory.

You have never mentioned Rodman, or his Eliza, are they in N. York? I heard he was in bad health. do they not visit you? tell me something about them when next you write _ and of Mr. Verplanck too _ remember me to them both _ the McCalls expect Gertrude here tomorrow. I expect Paulding will be mortified at the reception his book has received here _ I hear there [is] a series of criticisms publishing that will not give him pleasure _

Adieu My Beloved Maria, believe me always faithfully
Yours. RG.

[Address:]
Mrs. Ogden Hoffman
New York

[Editors' Note: The year of this letter is based on the marriage of Mary Lyle in November 1818.]