

**Rebecca Gratz to Maria Fenno Hoffman**

**December 29, [1818]**

I am ashamed to hear My dearest Maria, that you have been to Moses' to enquire about me, when I am your debtor for a charming letter, and have neither the plea of bad health or bad spirits to excuse my remissness \_ but I have been very busy and very stupid which perhaps would do as much to mar a correspondence. tho not so much to excuse it \_ I was however glad to hear you had been out, for this two fold reason, that it is a [proof?] you are well \_ and tho' I do not deserve it, that you thought of me \_ I went down this afternoon to see our old friend Kitty Jones. who is come to pass the winter in Phila. she is sadly altered from the beautiful blooming Girl, who used to be so much admired, and as we see our own changes, in the looks of our cotemporaries I feel quite like an old woman this evening \_ I drank tea at Sister Hays's with Ann and Emma Seton & they have promised to meet here on Thursday Evening \_ Emma has not been as sociable as I expected, but I am a dull companion & Ellens absence takes away the only inducement she could have to come frequently here \_ Maria is not so gay, nor so well acquainted with Emma, but she is a very sensible cheerful companion, and greatly beloved by those who best know her. I am quite charmed with your account of Eliza Rodman. am glad you have such a companion. The letter you read me from her, prepared me to hear a favorable report of her mind and heart. when I recollect how fondly our dear Harriet loved her I rejoice that she has grown up so worthy of her partiality. and that the loss she sustained in her infancy has not marred the pro  
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mise of her tender years. she has no female friend to guide her but You My dear Maria, and you no doubt feel interested in her situation

What are Mr. Rs situation & prospects \_ I heard he had not succeeded in his expectations abroad?

You can hardly have heard from Edward yet \_ but I hope you have become reconciled to your separation from him \_ It is so natural for Young men to desire to travel, that I think it fortunate when some object of business can be combined with it \_ Ben will I expect be satisfied with a winters toure, I find by his letters that he has gotten over the enthusiastic notion that the western people were all heros. and the country a Paradise \_ Bubeck set the young men crazy after that territory. but I believe experience will bring them back to their senses it is not considered healthy, and many who went from here \_ have returned with much the same feelings Wittington came back from London \_

We have had a pleasant winter thus far \_ so pleasant that I almost

think you might venture on a journey and come pass the time your husband will be absent with us \_ if he goes to Washington this winter you can accompany him this far \_ and as two of my brothers talk of going there also our two families combined will not be larger than one, when all its members are at home. I do not offer this as an inducement. tho' perhaps it occurred in the selfish desire to have as much of your company to my self as possible \_ I am glad to hear you have been tempted to the Theatre, I think we should endeavour to conform to the wishes of our friends even when we are obliged to make a small sacrifice of our own, and as a good wife, you could not resist your husband's will \_ we are not likely to have this phenomenon here, as she has rejected Mr. Woods offer of an engagement, and he has such good houses without her, that he will not be likely to bribe her higher. I saw very little of Mary Cooper \_ [but] found her as agreeable and interesting as usual. they have purchased a house at Bristol and are [end of page]

going to reside there which I should think would be very agreeable to her there is a very good society there in the summer, and good schools in the neighbourhood, I shall be very glad to receive Mr. Verplanck's oration, I am a great admirer of his writing and it will be quite a treat to me, I should like to be of your parties sometimes to listen to his & Eliza Rodmans Parisian anecdotes \_ Mr. V's are I suppose of literary personages \_ and somehow, there is such a charm in the wit and easy conversation of French men of letters, that they seem the best society in the world \_ Mr. V mentioned his intention of giving a biographical sketch of a distinguished French Jew he was acquainted with, who died while he was in Europe but I believe it has not yet appeared \_ The Analectic has greatly improved since he & Walsh appear in its pages \_ but Alas poor Dennie! his shade would blush should news of the Port Folio's degeneracy reach the Elysian fields \_ in the last number there was a very shameful piece of Poetry addressed to H which so pointedly applied to H. Kuhn that it was [...ted?] notice would have been taken of it, it was a town talk and J. Hall became a little alarmed, but I believe Hartman was too [much?] in his own affairs \_ and too well satisfied with his success to care much what the P. F. said \_ their marriage was privately solemnized, and she dispensed with all bridal pomp, and went home the second evening to her own house \_ no one seems to think it a marriage of great promise \_ he is an old bachelor more by habit than years, he has always lived a solitary life \_ no female graced their domestic fire side \_ and unless Ellen can infuse the graces into him, they will be obliged to study the dead languages \_ and read classics together \_ she was captivated by his intellectual acquirements it is said \_ but she has lived too much in the world, to retire at Twenty from its pleasures \_

How are all your dear Children? embrace them for me, and tell them their little friends often talk of them \_ Gratz thinks it a proof of manliness to boast of Georges acquaintance, and talks of his ships and being Georges Captain with great glee \_ Rachel & Maria send their affectionate love to you, we expect Ellen home next week \_ Jack has gone for her \_ but stolen a few days

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to see Washington, where he had never been before \_ Adieu, My beloved friend,  
may the New Year bring you stores of health and happiness \_ present  
my love & best wishes to all your household \_ including E R. and take  
the choicest to your self warm from the heart of your RG\_

[Address:]

Mrs. Ogden Hoffman  
New York

[Editors' Note: The year was determined by the date of Ellen Lyle Kuhn's marriage.]