

Margaret (Peggy) Ewing to Rebecca Gratz

May 2, [no year]

May 2nd.

I have not the vanity to presume that my long silence has been any punishment to you _ else would I say, you deserved it for the [acrewal?] of so much selfishness as you possess to be the motive of your favoring me occasionally with a letter _ a little twinge of conscience, which at the moment I am repreving you, makes me plead guilty of the same sin, insures your pardon _ and if this silent monitor were always equally tender, we should spare ourselves and our fellow [citizens], a wonderful deal of reproach _ I am conscious of the same feelings with regard to letter-writing, that you possess _ and my aversion to circulating my epistles, at one time, was so great, that I was content to forgo the pleasure of receiving, in order to spare myself the pain of writing them _ and now I confess myself so much of a mortal that I am stimulated to the execution, by the hope of reward _ I am, however, always amply repaid _ even 'tho' it be with a half sheet of paper _ when I opened your large letter, and saw the date, I thought you meant to make an April fool one _ which would have been an [unreasonable] attack _ but when you civilly told me you had no more paper, I was rather flattered that, in extremities, you should consider me _ and comforted myself by thinking of
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of the old adage, "that "half a loaf is better than no bread" _ but my taste so well relished a part, that you must excuse its asking for a whole one, next time _

I am sorry I cannot give you any insight into the origin of a custom that has, I dare to say, excited the curiosity of more of the world than you and me _ I have often puzzled myself, but without effect, to unravel the mystery why the first of April should be set apart as a day of folly _ But so far from thinking it a proof against the improvement of the world, I think it a strong argument in favour of it _ By dedicating one day in the year to the Goddess of Folly, (I don't rightly know whether this Deity is male or female), the natural conclusion will be that every other one

is appropriated to Wisdom _ This without doubt
is female) _ Besides do they not shew their paling
in the choice of deities _ all the world can sacrifice
on the altar of the one _ but few I fear would be
the true votaries attendant on the other _ so much
for conjecture _ I think it a question nice enough
to employ the wits of Mr. Oldschool _ and if there is a
dearth of matter or spirit in the late "loungers," I advise
you to submit it to him for farther elucidation _
By the bye, I had almost forgot there was such a thing
in being as the port-folio _ have any bright geniuses
appeared to reform the ladies, since I saw it _ any
thing like wit and scandal will be new to me when I
return _ am not I in a strange place _
As I have already told you what was not the reason
[end of page]

of my so long neglecting you, I will now tell you
what was _ namely, that I have been sick almost
ever since I rec'd your letter _ and had not spirits
for any extraordinary exertion _ I knew you would
consider circumstances _ and tho' I flattered myself
you might be disappointed, I did not fear your
being offended _ my health is now quite restored _ and
my spirits revive as I see my Sister gradually improve
in hers _ but gradual it is _ tho' quite as rapid,
as from her extreme sufferings, we have any reason to
expect _ she is beginning to sit up; and I do think
of home ever more as a prospect not altogether so
distant but that it may be viewed otherways than in
Imagination _ I am tired indeed of being so long ab-
sent from it _ I had the pleasure of seeing [and?]
receiving much attention from both Mrs. Scott, and [...]
[Sleug...?] whilst I was detained in Lancaster _ for [which?]
I feel particularly grateful _ Betsy talked then of
paying you a visit this spring _ I told her I hoped
she would be ready to go when I returned _ but I fear
her visit will be over before I am ready to attend
her _ If a long letter will in any way compensate for
four weeks silence, I am sure you will now be satisfied _
Remember me to your Mother, Mrs. Hayes, and the girls _
and recollect that almost the only pleasure I can
now experience is hearing from my friends that they
are well, and exempt from the troubles I have lately
witnessed _ your very expression of affection is truly
felt, and sincerely returned Yr

ME

[Address:]
Miss Rebecca Gratz
Philadelphia

[Endorsement:]
M Ewing
May 2nd