

Letter from Martha Washington to Fanny Bassett Washington, May 24, 1795

Philadelphia May the 24th 1795

My Dear Fanny,

Your affectionate favor of the 20th is come to my hands – I am very glad to hear by it that your children are well – and yourself – I am truly sorry that any thing should happen in your family to give you pain Black children are liable to so many accidents and complaints that one is hardly sure of keeping them I hope you will not find in him much loss the Blacks are so bad in their nature that they have not the least gratitude for the kindness that may be shewed to them –

from what I have heard of Mr Pearces House Keeper I wished very much to have her engaged to stay at mount vernon while I was at home so goe into the sellers meat house and look into the milk and butter Kitty has had it so long under her care – that I think she should be looked too to give a better account of it – we shall bring white servants with us which will make it necessary that I should have a person to see to their having what is proper, done for them, and have their vtuals alwas in proper order– I think it is really necessary to have a person such a one as Mrs Skinner is in our family while I am there besides that of looking after the women that work they always Idle half their time away about their one business and wash so bad that the cloths are not fitt to use – if she will come only to stay while I am there I shall be very much pleased to have her – I do expect we shall have a good deal of company many hear talk of coming to see the Federal city and will take that opportunity to come to Mt Vernon while we are there

I am my Dear Fanny very sensible of your goodness and attention in having everything done for me as you can – but it always gave me pain to see you have so much trouble while I was at home – if Mrs Skinner will come I shall be much happier to have her to do the drudgry – and then shall have the pleasure to have more of your company – and shall see my person whose business it is to attend to all the wants and cares about the house

I am very much obliged to you my dear Fanny for offering to preserve strawberry for me – I dont think it will be worth while – to do any – I wish to live in a plain stile while I am at home – and we shall always have greene fruit which can be preserved at the time it is wanted which wig be better for use– should thair be any goosberry I should wish to have some bottled and some of the morelly cherrys dried – I should think old Doll cannot have forgot how to do them if she has Mrs Skinner may come to the hous as soon as she will – and she may have all the Beds and Bed Cloths air and clened the Bedsteads all taken down and cleaned and well rubbed – so that thair may be nothing of that kind to do when I come home – and to have every part of the House cleaned from the garrets to the sellers as I wish to have every thing done that can be done before I come home

Thank god we are all well – the President has been very well since his return

The girls and Washington are well – and join the President and me in love to you and children we have not heard this week neither from Mrs Stuart nor Mrs Peter – I wish the House was done for when I go to house keeping I am a flraid Patty will get leasey if she has not some thing to do

I am with love and affection my dear Fanny your sincear well wisher M Washington
From Mrs M Washington

May 1795

Document Source: George Washington's Mount Vernon