

[Pencil collations noted, but only as far as
just over leaf, with another example, sent for
examination by the curator of Arbroath
Public Library in July 1954].

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Letter from the Princess Charlotte to her
Mother

Chesham Oct. 10. 1817

My dearest Mother,

In many few days may
elapse before I may claim to be addressed
by the endearing appellation with which
I have commenced this letter, when
Providence may develop new duties
which may in some measure
temper, but can never supersede
those moral & pious obligations which
have been heretofore ^{imposed} heaped upon me.

Were I to disguise my
true sentiments or to affect feelings other
than those which occupy my bosom
in the prospect of becoming a Mother,
I should feel myself utterly unworthy
of that parental affection which consti-
tutes the second bliss of life.

United to a Man, whose whole
attentions are directed to the promotion

of the state

no date

will

to me

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x mind

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at least

of any happiness, I cannot but feel pleasure
in the anticipations of that hour of
glorious hope which shall enable me
to present to him a new tie of commu-
nial love, and to the nation a (new
and) abundant source of consolation
and future promise, political consider-
ations in this instance, stand in
competition with the more near
and tender feelings of the Heart.

While as a Wife, I am alive
to all those tender and anxious suscep-
tibilities which accompany my peculiar
situation, I am compelled by circum-
stances to extend my views to contem-
plations widely different in their kind
as in their latitude - contemplations in-
volving the nearest and most desirable
interests of a People to who I owe a debt
of Gratitude scarcely to be liquidated -
Gratitude for unbounded affection!

To relieve in some degree this
weight of obligation & to justify the
universal confidence in the strength
and consistency of my character

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I have determined should Providence
please to bless me with offspring, so to
regulate its early reason, & to direct its
infant energies, that the lessons I have
received from you and the wisdom
which time and observation have
confirmed may be handed down to my
child with a view to the perpetuation
of the great principle, that the legitimate
end of all Government is the welfare
of society & that political & private virtue
is the same foundation & the best
bulwarks to a Throne.

But, Oh my Mother! when my
timid imagination revolves upon the
uncertainty which veils futurity—
when I look to the dark probabilities
which may put a period to the claim
of hope, severe shadows shake my courage,
and I feel myself the victim of terror
which reason would almost demon-
strate absurd, at such a trying moment
Why am I debarred from the soothing
voice of maternal affection? Why is
not my Mother allowed to pour

cheerfulness into the sinking heart of
her inexperienced and trembling Child?
I have no friend, no relation near me,
whose advice may guide, or whose
admonitions may check my conduct
surrounded by Strangers, with a single
exception, my heart feels itself alone; &
should the protection of Heaven leave
me and I fall the presence of a Mother
would speedily impart a serenity and
resignation to the mind which would
soothe the pillow of her dying head &
prevent her distracted spirit from sink-
ing in the hour of her severest trial.

Secluded from the giddy world
I have learnt to set a due value on
that retirement which has taught me
a more perfect knowledge, not only of
myself, but of the society I may one
day be called to rule.

Holly and
Maide no longer near to me, ^{nor} the
imposing blazonry which they exhibited
to my early years, I have read, reflected
& conversed & I trust the wisdom of a
future day will rescue me from having
read, reflected, or conversed in vain.

The sufferings of my early years
acute as they were in their operation
have not been unproductive of instruction

Their effect has been to correct the sanguine-
 ness of disposition which was too common-
 ly a source of severe disappointment
 and which led me to view things
 through a prejudiced medium, a sort of
 premature experience has given me
 that insight into human life & human
 character which in ordinary cases and
 circumstances is the result of the study &
 observation of years - Your virtues my dearest
 Mother & your affections added strength to the
 affectional nature had entwined about my
 heart and urged me to cling to you in
 all changes & render all shades of persecution
 with a consistency which those who hated
 you termed obstinacy but which those
 who loved you elevated by the name
 of honorable perseverance - I felt I was
 not merely acquiescing in the fulfilment of
 moral duties, I in proportion however
 as I have loved you do I now feel
 the bitterness of your absence you have
 no substitute in this heart, there is
 none to occupy your place in my
 sinking eyes, even the affectionate atten-
 tions of my amiable consort are
 insufficient to supply the chasm in my
 bosom but leave it unsatisfied

I have illustrious relatives it is true
but they offer me no kindness, and if they did
there are certain slumbering recollections
which would check my ardor to receive them

I have but one Mother, and
no variation of place or circumstance can
remove her from my mind. Heaven
surpassed her image on my soul & time
has established it there as its native &
legitimate sphere. By a refinement of
Rarity we may be separated on Earth
and I as well as yourself may be doomed
the victims of unaliquant persecution

But in a better world our congenial
Spirits will wish to meet each other
when no envious or traiting friends can
interpose or impede the pleasure which
flow from the pure foundation of filial
& maternal love. Such sentiments
as these naturally arise out of the contem-
plation of my situation at this moment.

Should it be the pleasure of Provi-
dence that I survive the hour of
approaching danger, I may at some
future period be endowed with power
to restore you to that situation you
were doomed to embellish. But if an
allwise decree should summon me

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from this sphere of anxious apprehensions,
 on, not for myself but for my Mother
 a pang of human blood across my belic-
 void brain, even then however my
 last prayers would be to Heaven to
 gift you with that sublime feeling of
 pious resignation which would teach
 you to bow submissively to the
 chastening stroke of our common Father
 and to console your afflicted heart with
 the anticipation of our reunion in
 a world where felicity is unimpair'd
 & where malice is inadmissible.
 Believe me, my adored Mother
 I fear less to die than to live, the
 prospect of protracted existence is so
 beset with dangers & difficulties, so
 shadowed with clouds & uncertainties
 so replete with anxieties & apprehensions
 that I must shrink from the contempla-
 tion of it, and fly for refuge even
 to the probability of my removal from
 so joyful an inheritance. The page
 of History has determined that happiness
 is not the possession of those who
 move in the lofty circles to which

my birth entitled me to look, I cannot
hope for an exception in my favor,
all the joys of life are centered in my
present retirement; and they are
even poor, because you are not a
participation in them. But even the
unqualified enjoyment of them must
be brief. & I must converge into a
situation incongruous to my soul, &
destructive to all my hopes of felicity
on earth. What cause have I to show
that if you which others may behold with
pleasure? What cause have I to covet
that existence others so highly prize?

Death, would obliterate all image
of delight from my heart, save that
which, in the portrait of a beloved
brother nature has still left to the
hoping, doubting, yet fearing

Charlotte