SIDE ONE

[1811]

[Francina Augustina Cheston]

My Dear Reni,

I feel as if my hand writing would startle you as much as if a Ghost Dar to appear before you, for you have had too much reason to suppose I must long ere this, have been an inhabitant of the World of spirits — To make a compleat narrative of the last 4 years — (can it be possible it is so long since I have written to you) would now ingross too much time & such a long letter to a large Volume — A sketch will do, & your imagination will readily fill out the picture. When your last (dated July 10th 1806 — reached me) it found me much out of health with the fatigue of a large family upon my hands — Mrs Thornbill had been again driven home for health — She recovered, & left us again in the Spring of 1809 — My dear husband (our tender) & myself more so than usual — In octo^r — of the same year after much anxious care — our adored Angelic Boy, just 12 years of age, it pleased the Almighty to recall to his heavenly Mansion — This is a subject I cannot dwell upon or I should unfit myself for every other — It has been a hard struggle — but after much acute suffering of both body & mind — it has pleased the great disposer of all events, to heal the Wound in a certain degree, but in spight of the many claims I fortunately had, upon my exertions in various ways — I was long a very miserable object in both health & spirits — incapable of anything but the immediate calls upon me from my domestic circle — Time, tho it cannot efface, will soften these hard visitations — & it has had its influence upon me — I have the comfort as well as anxious care of three sweet girls — the eldest 12 — the 2d 11 — the third 8 — They are amiable promising children — but not to compare to our lost Angel, in Beauty or talents — but he was not for this World — It has pleased

to have few Neighbours through life — I said I did not particularize any one — but trust & hope I shall soon hear you are surrounded by those most dear to you in health & happiness — Lest you may have forgot our address — it is 5 Michael's Place Brompton — London mind must be added — We meditate changing our abode but not for some months, or perhaps longer — as we may not readily find another to our minds — Our summers (nothing occurring to prevent) will be spt in travelling about a little — Never before having had our time at our own disposal, I must now my Dear Namesake, conclude, only adding, that your Uncle joins in most warm & sincere regards to every one of your domestick circle with your

Affectionate Aunt —
Fran^a — Aug^a — Bensley

my b^d Feb^y
1801 —
meant for 1811