
91 6/15/1847 *From:* O. O. Howard

To: Mrs John Gilmore

OOH-0083

Bowdoin College
Brunswick Me JUN 17

South Leeds
Maine

Source: Bowdoin

Bowdoin College June 15 1847

Dear Mother

According to your request I now commence a short epistle home to inform you of my good health neither affected by the canker, rash or any other morbid disease. By the way how do Mr Bates' children do? No! I am not only in good health as yet but feel in quite good spirits. I have not made up all yet except my latin & nearly all of algebra. I believe it is colder in Brunswick than in Leeds for today any one is scarcely comfortable without a fire.

We had a rather tedious ride "On the Whole" last Friday, for it was very windy & rather chilly. Besides the travelling was not extraordinarily good, there being many pitches & gullies. We arrived about dusk and I was struck with some surprise to find the College Yard look so pleasant. I could not have believed that the leaving of the trees & bushes & springing up of the grass & plants would have made so much & so pleasant an alteration.

The President requests an excuse of my absence from one of my parents. Ask father if he will write me one in your next letter which I wish before long to save me from a fine of 25 cts per day of which I did not know before.

This is sufficient

"Pres' Woods

Pleas excuse my son's absence of the commencement of this term "being necessarily detained."

Signed"

You know that I could not come before Perley did therefore it was necessary. But tell father "if he thinks that excuse would be equivocating". To write that I was retained through his permission, or rather through his "not-objection".

I hope you are as well as when I left. How did Rowland like his excursion to Jay or Canton? I have returned to my old Club to Board. The price being so high in other places. I find it rather hard to apply myself since my return, but as the saying is "Shall soon get broke in".

Ask father to speak with John Lane respecting that school for me, for if I do not get that I shall speak for one in Freeport which I can have at \$14.00 per month but I should like to come home if possible.

Give my respects to the neighbors & friends & bid good bye for me those whom in my haste I did not. Give my love to my brothers.

It is now Thursday morning. I have now seated myself to finish my letter. Our class had a "adjourn" in Latin this morning little expected but very favorable for me to make up my greek.

It is some warmer this morning than it has been, but does not yet appear much like summer. There is now only about nine weeks of this term. My room is quite pleasant but I intend to have it more so by having it washed to day. I took that large striped Blanket & made a very good screen for my clothes with it.

Have you heard from Elias Lane of late? If so how does he do? I promised to call & see him when I returned to Brunswick but we did not go that way.

That little boy who came with us looked quite bright when he came in sight of home. I rather think he was more homesick than anything else at our house & sorrowed at the prospect of having to walk & find his way home.

I was examined yesterday on the week of algebra which I had to make up & came off very easily indeed having only one lesson to do. Yet I had to make up all the preceeding before I could go on with the class because it requires a knowledge of that to do the sums where the class were being the hardest mathematics we have ever had.

From Your affectionate Son
O O Howard

[Envelope]

[Postmark] BRUNSWICK Me JUN 17

[From] OO Howard June 15 1847

[To]

Mrs John Gilmore

South Leeds

Maine

92 6/20/1847 *From:* Rowland B. Howard *To:* Mr Oliver O Howard

OOH-0084a

South Leeds, Me

Brunswick Me

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds June 20th 1847

Dear Brother

To day is so stormy that we could not atend meting so I have time write you a few lines. The day I went to canton was very storming in the afternoon and very pleasant in the forenoon. When I returned I stoped at Aunt Lucretias [Lucretia Howard Leadbetter] all night and came home in morning. The next Tuesday after you left I went to <Texas> or Mexico it is all the same. I did not find it a very hot country on Tuesday & Wednesday on the contrary it was very cold riding in the rain on Tuesday. I came as far as Mrs Rose's on Wednesday and came home on Thursday Morning. When we went to Mexico we went through the east part of Jay to a Mrs Wests. It being about forty five miles. When we went up we went through the towns of Wayne Livermore Jay Canton & Dixfield to Mexico. When we returned we came down on the other side of the river through Dixfield Dern Canton Hartford livermore Turner to Leeds. It is a very Mountainous Country.

I believe your friends & acquaintances are all well. Mr Bates's family are all geting well. We expect to have the rail road across Mr Coffin Bog through to Wayne Vilige. There is quite an excitement about it. Now you write that your ride to Brunswick was rather unpleasant. What a good thing it was that you did not have our old white horse.

I want you to write as soon as you can get time, and see if there is no fine for it.

Your Brother
Rowland

94 6/22/1847 *From:* O O Howard

To: Mrs John Gilmore

OOH-0085

Bowdoin College
Brunswick, Me

South Leeds Me.

Source: Bowdoin

Bowdoin College June 22 1847

Dear Mother

I was very much in hopes of receiving an answer to my preceding letter before I again wrote, yet having a few spare moments after preparing my algebra lesson from the present to recitation I thought that they could not be better employed than in communicating a few lines to you composed if possible of ideas if perchance what is extracted from my "brain" can assume the name of ideas. Hoping that you are all as well as when I left I can with truth say the same of myself for I think I never enjoyed better health than I have thus far this term. But to say that such weather as we have had inspired one with anything but glowing thoughts or enlivened the spirits I think would be absurd. For if there is anything which will make a person lonesome & look on the "dark side" of life it is a dark rainy day for logically one object causes the thoughts of others. Similar in like manner a pleasant day awakens pleasant thoughts & reflections.

Of late we have dropped Latin & commenced logic rather an easy & interesting study treating as it does for the most part on the mind, its reasoning powers & faculties, which especially ought to interest any one or every one who wishes to have clear conceptions & notions of objects continually surrounding him or to investigate intricate truths & principles. Yes it is our duty to study so as to understand as fully as possible the mind its powers & abilities, in order to direct it in the <in the> right chanel for moral & intellectual advancement to assist in reasoning & investigating so as to have clear ideas on any subject. That we may judge for ourselves not dependent on the skill or seeming superiority of others. Also to help us to understand our language better. That we may not have superfluous terms or too oft repeated words but making it (language) more concise yet not less comprehensive. Besides logic shows how we may select appropriate language to express ideas, with various other things.

It is now Wednesday afternoon. [June 23]

It has cleared off very beautiful & warm making quite a contrast before now & the morning when we were under the necessity of having a fire to keep us comfortable the relics of which are still extant. The Pencinean Soc' have an election of officers to day causing amongst them much excitement. They did not elect a President last year on account the most of the members belonging to secret societies the interest of one conflicting with that of the other. But I understand they have succeeded better this year. Our election is not till a week from to day. I have been reading of late more modern work on the life of Petrarch than DeSades. The one I read at home. He makes out Petrarch a great man yet his writings are not so flattering as De'Sades. I am almost angry often times when he says any thing derogatory to him having become so prepossessed in his favour by reading the other first. Such is my disposition. I am easily prejudiced for or against a man or object by first impressions so that it is very difficult for me to change or retract. For inst. if a man appears to me like a fool the first time I see him it is hard for me to be convinced that he has common sense. Or if the <man> shows himself my enemy it is long before I can forgive or call & believe him a friend.

I have received a paper from Silas Lee a few days since besides which I have received nothing from any body but am in hopes to get something from home daily. For I want some framework before I write any more letters as you will perceive before perusing half of this. It is most impossible for me to fill out a letter, for there is nothing transacting here that will interest you, and much less passing in my mind worthy of attention or note.

It is Friday morning

I received yours & Rowland's letter yesterday and am very grateful for it, as any thing from home (always being interesting to me) serves to banish an occasional lonesomeness & the often experienced tedium of College life.

As to the Freeport school it consists of about 40 scholars, had a fine fellow of our class teach it last winter. But there is an objection of which I did not know when I wrote you before. I shall be obliged to board round making it rather inconvenient for me to keep my studies along. Carrying my books & clothes from place to place.

Give father my thanks for the excuse, which I have not yet handed in, but shall before next Monday. I know it was against the College laws to stay out with out an excuse, but I thought my own would answer. I was not admonished as you intimated, but Perley asked the President one day if his own excuse would answer and he said it would not if he was under age. And he said there was no hurry about getting it. Anytime this term would do.

Give my love to all. Tell Rowland I will write him as soon as I can get time. As to Monmouth schools I do not know of any good one. But I should like to have the one Seth Howard taught last winter.

From your affectionate Son
O O Howard

P.S. As to the Pin I Bought one & paid \$4.00 for it what Perly paid for his (Stinchfield asked more) & with other little articles which I was obliged to buy took what I expected to retain as <> change. But you can do can do as you think best about sending me more as I told father when I left. I would not call on him again this term. O O Howard

[Envelope]
[From] O O Howard
June 22 1847
[Postmark] BRUNSWICK Me JUN 26
[To] Mrs John Gilmore
South Leeds Me.

95 7/6/1847

From: O O Howard

To: Mr Rowland B. Howard

OOH-0086

Bowdoin College
Brunswick, Me

South Leeds Maine

Source: Bowdoin

Bowdoin College July 6 1847

Dear Brother

Since my last epistle home I have had quite a tour. I set out last Friday after noon, with the intention of going to Hallowell to spend the "fourth of July", went to Bath in the stage and when I arrived I heard that the Huntress bearing the president [James K. Polk] would not be there till 1/2 past 9 o'clock. So I took a stroll to see the city of Bath. After walking until I was weary. I went to the reading room from whence I was summoned by the firing of cannons announcing that the President had arrived or was near. I ran to the wharf and worked with all my might to get on board through the dense crowd and when I got there a man pushed me back. But at last just as the boat was starting I succeeded in getting on Board. The President spoke a few words to the men on the wharf. But I was so occupied in forcing the crowd that I did not hear him. After stopping about five minutes at Bath we started for Hallowell. At the little town of Richmond there was a Bonfire on each side of the river and they fired a cannon five or six times as we were passing. Just as we were opposite the village, the President's men brought him out to be exhibited holding a candle near each side of his face. Then again as we came to Gardiner, there were guns, fires and again the President was called from his berth to be looked at as he passed. When we arrived at Hallowell it was about half past one at night. They fired a few guns in Hallowell but otherwise they were very quiet. He went directly from the boat to Augusta where the State House was illuminated and all other publick buildings. I walked up to the village and there I saw a boy who told me that Perry Lee was down on the wharf. So I went up to his house or near it to wait for him in a place where I could see the fire Works at Augusta. In about 15 minutes Pery came and I staid with him the remainder of Friday night.

Saturday morning I arose about 1/2 past eight ate my breakfast & started for Augusta. The president passed the night at Ruel Williams. So they formed the procession at the Bridge and marched to the State House. The Procession was composed of sons of Temperance and Cadets of the same & Odd Fellows with perhaps a hundred horsemen. The President led the <men> with a splendid equipage composed of six fine large white horses as white as milk among which was Rufus K Page's of Hallowell worth between 6 & 8 hundred dollars with a carriage that was brought from Boston. Next followed the Vice Pres. After him his suit or retinue. Then the horsemen & last of all the before mentioned footmen. They proceeded to the State House where he was expected to deliver an address to the people. But he was so wearied out that after addressing the senate & house of representatives he only expressed his thanks to the people for their courtesy & honouring him by their presence for which speech Reddington was obliged to swing his hat three or four times & tell the people to cheer, it was so hard to get an applause.

After this I was so tired having been in a jam so long that I returned to Hallowell being about two o'clock & went to Grandmother's & took dinner where I staid till after tea. Then I went home with Pery & staid all night. Pery is as wild as ever. His mother worrying about him continually which I am affraid ere long will break her down. She look poor & sick, sad & dejected now. I pittied her! But she has got an irremediable trouble in that boy.

Monday morning I went on an excursion to the mouth of the river & returned as far as Bath & started to walk for Brunswick. But on the way I was overtaken by a young man & a boy who carried me very much to my convenience & pleasure for I was so tired I could but just walk.

Grandmother was very well. Jennings said he saw Thomas Bridgham & Hellen. Everet [Bridgham] & his lady [Sally] & Pernelia Jennings at Augusta.

Give my love to Roland, Charles & Delly. Tell Mother I am expecting a letter from her. Give my love to her & father. It is very warm and sultry making it quite uncomfortable to study. Our term ends in seven weeks from tomorrow or next day. After which time we shall assume the Dignity of Sophomores. I saw Charles Pollard in H. He inquired for you & said he would like to have a visit from you.

From your affectionate brother
O.O. Howard

[Envelope]
[From] OO Howard
July 6 1847
[Postmark] Brunswick Me Jul 9
[To] Mr Rowland B. Howard
South Leeds Maine

96 7/11/1847 *From:* Oliver O Howard

To: Mrs John Gilmore

OOH-0087

Bowdoin College
Brunswick, Me

South Leeds Me

Source: Bowdoin

Bowdoin College July 11, 1847

Dear Mother

I am very much thankful & grateful for your last kind letter. I wish you would write oftener. It serves to calm & cheer my spirits. I am naturally of a warm temperament & changing mind. I have hours when I feel cheerful & think mine a pleasant lot - considering that I have parents & friends to assist & aid me. Then again I am despondent knowing that I deserve not their approbation, affection & esteem shown me that I do not grasp at every opportunity of improvement & cultivate my mind to fill the station expected of me. As I have said your letters have a good effect to dispell gloom persuading me to yield & follow the advice of one having experienced all the changes & vicissitudes of life. Knowing what are the causes equally of trouble & affliction, peace & pleasure.

When I was at Hallowell my uncle [John Otis] talked considerable with me. He said I ought not incur the least expense or purchase the least thing without first considering its essential necessity. I told him I was naturally rather frank & generous especially in pecuniary matters that if a person was a tried friend & treated me well. It was my intention to return the same. The same principle I carried to money matters. If as I visited his room he had refreshments & invited me to partake, or asked me to smoke with him, when he came to mine I would do the same. Uncle thought it wrong that I should look for self & purchase what must be & no other. I grant mother his argument is plausible & of course will suit your views for you wish me to be as comfortably well situated as possible when I graduate. But to adopt such a course of conduct would be almost a second nature to me, to be prudent & saving is my aim. But to be pennurious or mean is my aversion. You know my disposition, you have always have taught me to be generous to my friends & so may receive their approbation & esteem, and in college we form as firm & true friends as in any other situation in life. We live alike, pursue the same studies & it is natural for us to seek out kindred spirits & disposition like our own to associate with.

I will not extenuate my expenses of the last term. I saw that you & father thought me unreasonable in letting them be so high. I felt hurt that I had justly incurred your censure (whether expressed in words or look it does not matter), therefore I came here with the firm resolution to curtail my expenditures in every way possible & bring home a smaller bill. And really thought I should be successful.

But when I arrived here they told me that the library must soon be established in the New Chapel & that many new volumes were necessary to fill it there & that this term's end would bring with it No Bonfire & freshman celebration, with other unthought of expenses. I began to be almost discouraged wishing I had not tried to accomplish the collegiate course, but had remained at home & pursued the road of the honest & respected farmer. Again I thought that many a young man with less brilliant prospects than myself had paid all these bills, only dependant on self.

My ambition told me that to relinquish all my future hopes & anticipations with out a trial would cause uneasiness & unhappiness and my firmness & adhesiveness to what ever I undertake urged me to prove my course foolish & vain before I deserted it. To be poor when I am thrown upon the world will indeed be hard, but what others have done with out education may I not do with yet a comfortable maintenance!

How need we riches when we have enough to eat, drink & wear. "We need only in our youth provide for old age". To have distinction and honor is indeed pleasant & desirable. If I have talents sufficient, poverty will not hinder the attainment of these objects, but rather incite me to action, urge me on to strive where sufficiency would cause less perseverance & trial.

But no more of this. How is your's & the family's health? Give my love to all. This letter I have written whilst meditating on my prospects. I know not what you will think of it. I suppose you will think me foolish & short sighted not to look rather to future good than present affluence. Pardon all amiss & write soon to correct errors. One reason why I went to H. was in search of a school, but was unsuccessful in obtaining one. Tell me how Warren & father have succeeded in obtaining one for me so that I can decide before long whether to take this at Freeport or not.

From you affectionate Son
Oliver O Howard

[Envelope]
[From]OO Howard
July 11th 1847
[Postmark]BRUNSWICK Me JUL 11
[To] Mrs John Gilmore
South Leeds Me

97 8/1/1847

From: Oliver O Howard

To: Mrs John Gilmore

OOH-0088

Bowdoin College
Brunswick, Me

South Leeds Me

Source: Bowdoin

Bowdoin College Aug 1st 1847

Dear Mother

Although it is but a short time since I left Leeds yet I will write you thus soon according to my promise. I trust you are all in good health & spirits.

I am now nearly settled in my new room. My carpet was not large enough therefore I have resolved not to have it & think I shall not purchase one this term. When we arrived here my old room was occupied & my furniture moved into another adjacent unoccupied room. Bedstead taken apart, and other things in some disorder. We did not get here till dusk & it caused us much labor for two weary bodies at least to bring up our bed & other articles sufficient to make us comfortable for the night. Yet at last we accomplished it & had a good sleep.

I commenced reciting Wednesday afternoon to Prof Goodwin in french with whom I was much more pleased than I had anticipated being rather affable & agreeable than snappish & morose as before I had judged him. Therefore I perceive by observation that it is not well to judge too hastily.

We recite to Prof Packard in Horrace (Latin) immediately after prayers in the morning of which the scanning comes quite hard to me never having learned to scan & being obliged to give a great number of rules. But when anything difficult occurs to be solved or investigated I went as usual to my old maxim, "all things can be accomplished by perseverance" or as the Irishman said "Push."

I suppose it would be of no interest to you to hear how the freshmen have been treated. Suffice it to say that our class in spite of all lectures & admonitions have been no better or more sparing than the preceeding leaving instances & circumstances to be recited verbally.

I have nearly made up my studies for my few days absence but I have come to the conclusion that nothing is better than being here in season. Our class has increased in number very much since last term. It now numbers about thirty five, the largest class at present in college. I do not think half so much about my school since I returned having something else to do except to loaf about, hear stories & ponder upon what is heard. Yet my interest to get & prosper in my school is not diminished.

Give my respects to Roland A. Ask him if he is lonesome without a "fool" to cheer & vex him.

Sunday afternoon.

I have attended Church all day today & now after meeting have commenced finishing my letter.

Give my love to grandmother. Tell her that William rooms in the same end of College with me on the next floor above. I gave him the stockings & presents. He appears to enjoy himself & is in very good health. Rooms with Geo. Pollard. Give my love to my brothers & the rest of your family. Of whom It is composed I do not know, you change so often. Write me as soon as you hear respecting the school. I suppose father has not returned yet. He has writ me how he succeeded & how he liked Dixville upon a closer examination.

Give my respects to Uncle Ensign's family. If you see John tell him I wish him & his lovely bride joy, peace & happiness in their conjugal relations. [John Harrison Otis & Hellen Worthing were married 1847]

With this letter filled with nothing, I close hoping to write a better next time.

From your affectionate Son
Oliver O Howard

Mrs Eliza Gilmore
Leeds

[Envelope]
[From] OO Howard
Bwd College
Aug 1st 1847
[Postmark] BRUNSWICK Me Oct 3
[To] Mrs John Gilmore
South Leeds
Me

98 8/8/1847

From: O O Howard

To: Mrs John Gilmore

OOH-0090

Bowdoin College
Brunswick Me

South Leeds
Me

Source: Bowdoin

Bowdoin College August 8th 1847

Dear Mother

After a seemingly long time of "non correspondence" I have taken up my pen to renew it by a short epistle hoping that you are all the same in health & happiness as when I left. I heard of the death of my uncle the Dr. [Dr Thomas W Bridgham, the wife of Aurelia Howard, died July 23] a few days since by a letter from Mr. Perley . It was not so unexpected as it would have been had I not seen him in so low a state when at Leeds. I pity the bereaved state of his family. My Aunt nearly broken by toil & care & so many helpless or worse than helpless children dependant on their brothers & her with out resources or assistance but by their own hands. Yet many are in a worse situation still. Many have not brothers & a mother to care for them, thrown destitute on the cold & selfish charity of this world & many not even blessed with a free & republican government where the wages of the lowest laborer are sufficient for a livelyhood. Subject to tyranny & oppression they wear away a miserable existence. Their courage blasted, energy gone, & the intellect if it ere would have been clear & bright, reduced to a level with the intelligence of the brute from its situation.

Jennings & I arrived here about one o'clock, took dinner & prepared our afternoon recitations. Had quite a pleasant ride, yet it was rather warm & dusty. Before we arrived I did not have time to look for a school at Lewiston, for Jennings was in much haste to return to Bowdoin having a hard french Lesson to prepare for ½ past four recitation in the afternoon. I rely some upon father to get our own school for me, not being wholly deficient of physical strength, I think I can manage it or as in the surest assertion "I will try".

We have been on a review of the studies of the year a little over a week. The examination will be a fortnight from next Thursday. Therefore I can go home Friday. We did think of stopping till commencement. But a week's expense & so long time of <enui> & unemployment soon convinced us to the contrary. You will (if you please) let Rowland come Thursday. As the horse gets so jaded before she arrives at Leeds (not costing much to keep her one night) & perhaps he will have some curiosity to see our Freshmen Bon Fire, which is anticipated to be splendid if the rain does not continue till then.

Jennings sent some notices of his school about a fortnight ago which Mr Lane wrote. We did not get them here. He sent some more a few days ago. I hope he will have a good & sufficiently large school for I know there is no greater inducement to perseverance or encouragement to action especially for a young man than success in first attempts & undertakings. It seems to awaken his energy & renew his exertions. But to fail discourages & weakens. It matters not as much for a man of experience to fail of obtaining for he can easier detect his mistake or the secret of his failure & better retract & place himself arright.

I attended Church this morn & again the Bell is summoning me to appear before the tribunal of Mr Adams [Rev George E Adams]. Finnish after church

I have declaimed 3 times this term, twice before the Prof & my class & once in my soc. I like to declaim & therefore shall take some pains to appear well on the stage.

Give my love to all. I shall soon be with you. I require some more money. But I shall not write for any, thinking I shall have an opportunity of selling my freshman books. I your ever affectionate & well wishing son close my poorly writen epistle to A Kind Mother.

O O Howard

[Envelope]

[From] OO Howard Aug 8 1847

[Postmark] BRUNSWICK ME AUG 8

[To] Mrs John Gilmore

South Leeds Me

99 8/9/1847

From: E. Gilmore

To: Mr. Oliver O Howard

OOH-0089

South Leeds Me

Brunswick

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds Aug 9th 1847

My Dear boy,

How is your health, and how are you getting along since your very exceptable visit at Leeds. I have looked in vain for a letter every mail and thought every mail the next would carry one from me to you but I am getting old and I do not find myself quite as ready to take up my pen to write even to the dearest objects of my affections as I did when young to nothing but a common acquaintance, but I do not expect you (who are associated in almost every thought of your mother) and one young and engaged in literary pursuits to have any reasonable excuse for not gratifying me with a few lines very often.

If you could but in a small part imagine with what speediness I read every word that falls from your pen it would greatly enhance the pleasure of writing to me but you cannot know. I have lived long enough to know that there are affections of the heart that cannot be returned. There is no feelings nor views that you possess can in any way make you less dear to me however painful they may be to bear. To be sure if you could fall into my views and practice often then it would suit me and I think my plan of life would have few regrets in your heart, but I know by long experience that youth cannot take the experience of those who have gone before them, for their advantage if they would profit thereby this would soon be a wise world.

I do not think you have any criminal faults but I think you have some false notions and I think youth are subject to them. I do not wish you to be penurious nor ungenerous. No! No! Far from it. There are self denying principles that can be practiced to a great extent. I have always known from your childhood what were the faults of your nature but I was in hopes when <ripening> for manhood you would fight manfully against them and come off conquering now what you consider generosity. My son, you watch in your heart very closely and see if it not self gratification. Look over all the past year and examine your motives in every act and say to yourself was it generosity or was it following my own natural inclination. Or a desire to please others or some other similar motive, perhaps want of moral courage, that gained the ascendancy over me. Now I think allowing oneself at every flash of feeling, or at every request, to give way to the suggestion puts it out of their power to be generous, when the generosity is required.

So my son I felt no unkind feelings toward you, nor even censureable ones but I felt disappointed in my expectations. I felt as though I had done something to forward your wishes but I felt no resentment towards you because you had not carried forward my wishes. It was your own good I was looking at. Every year that you live beyond your income makes your income less next year. You see that one inroad makes way for another. You have a certain portion allotted you and there is no way to change it. I feel like one with their hands tied. If you had a father in the world engaged in business to profit and you did go a little beyond our calculation it would not make me feel as I do.

I desire to live in full confidence in you, and it is very pleasing to me that you so freely express your views to me. I hope always to live as we now live. What is pleasanter than confidence between parents and children. I hope I have not said anything in this letter that will discourage you in your pursuit of knowledge, or seeking to enlarge your understanding.

There has been nothing done here about a school. I have thought of seeing Warren Mower and trying to get him to engage one for you but I have not seen him and every thing remains just as when you were here. Our haying has engaged all attention. Your father has been to Watterville attending a meeting of railroad directors the past week. There has been a number of deaths in Leeds since you were here. Elias Lane was one of the number. The Brewsters carried out their neglect to the last. Not one of them went to the grave to see him laid away. Whatever their motive was it lessens them in my opinion. About a school <you> can take one to advantage anywhere. I wish you would as much as I desire you near me. I should think you had better keep school this winter. It is not unpleasant teaching in a pleasant neighbourhood and I expect it is not very pleasant in College in December. You can do what you think best about going to Freeport. Mrs. Bailey says she has taught in Freeport and tis a good place and fine people. She told me which school she taught but I do not recollect not being acquainted there.

Write to me soon as you receive this. Give my love to Perley. I hope you will room with him next year. I am satisfied you cannot do better. How much I desire to be useful to you in every respect. We are all as well as usual at home. Write what day we must send for you.

Yours truly
E. Gilmore

OO Howard

[Envelope]
[From] South Leeds Me
Aug 10
[To] Mr. Oliver O Howard
Brunswick

100 10/11/1847 *From:* Eliza Gilmore

To: Mr Oliver O Howard

OOH-0092

Leeds

Brunswick, Me

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds Oct 11th 1847

My dear son

I have received your kind letter in due time. I am glad that nothing more has befallen you than you mentioned. I thought the tenure of your letter was rather happy than otherwise. I hope you will make your daily labour rather a pleasure than a burden. I think of you a great deal. There you are placed at the best Institution of your native state, directed by some of the best men in the state. The Officers throu'out are good and pious men and men of good judgement. All their management no doubt arises from a desire for your best good. Oh! How much I desire you would take pleasure in obeying their laws. I take no pleasure in hearing of your college tricks. I am sorry you have adopted a rule of doing as you have been done by rather than "as you would like to be done by". I hope when you return to Leeds you will leave all your college tricks there and never mention them in Leeds. To ignorant minds it gives them an idea that you are more depraved than you really are, and to envious minds it gives them an advantage to create a prejudice against you which it is not in your power to eradicate.

Your father arrived on Saturday evening after you left in good health. I told him what we had heard respecting the school. He thinks it will amount to nothing at all and I have heard nothing since. Your grandmother is at your Uncles yet waiting for the wedding [See Note 1] which is to take place Tuesday evening [Oct 12]. Whether I am to be invited or not I don't know. I learned what I have written at meeting yesterday but received no invite.

Your aunt Fanny [Fanny Otis Bartlett, sister of Eliza] is on a visit here, has staid three days with me and is now staying for the wedding. Novella was married yesterday. Mary Wing was Brides Maid and after the wedding took a ride with Orren. They passed R.A. Gilmore on the way home from prayer meeting which almost upset him. He has paid great attention to Mary since you went away. I don't know but the dish is upset now, between him and Mary.

So much for nonsense. The recent Murder at Waterville is very shocking to me and all other persons with whom I speak on the subject. I am satisfied there is an avenging God. Let us pray daily to be kept by his all Powerful arm from sin. I hope you will form good and just sentiments, and have your actions correspond with them.

Give my love to Perley. He has my best wishes in every respect. R.B.H. spent the sabbath at home. He has never ventured to carry in any of his composition for correction. He said he should write on the sabbath but I did not find that he did. I am sorry he has no more perseverance against his own inclination.

I wish Mr Stinchfield would persevere with him. R.B.H. looked rather pale and had a poor appetite. Orren Bates attends Mr. Stinchfield's school. Elizabeth has not come home yet. I believe she went to Turner before you left home. Francis Birchman is with me yet. Our family enjoy good health. Mr Turner has gone to Augusta to stop some days. The box that contains your letters sets here before me. It is precious to me. I brought it down to read some of them to your aunt Fanny who is always interested in you. I have about made up my mind to make her a visit next May and have you for my beau if convenient.

Seven O'clock, evening.

I am entirely alone except Rodelphus in the trundle bed. Rowland A. Gilmore, Francis Richman are gone to Mr James Wing's to a husking and your father and Charles are in the barn husking corn. Last Wednesday I went to see Mrs Bridgham [Aurelia Howard Bridgham, a sister of Eliza's first husband]. Mother went with me and in the afternoon Mrs Bridgham went with us to your uncles [probably Ensign Otis] and Mrs Rackly too. So together with aunt Fanny we had quite a company. It seems Mr Jennings' school is finished. I called at Elder Laughten's and Mrs Daivies in the morning of the same day. I made the best of my visits.

Give my love to William. Tell him I hope he will enjoy college life. I saw Virgil on the <> in north room. Perhaps you do not wish it <> term. How did you succeed in selling your Books. Do try to have as few bills as possible

this term.

Charles went to Wayne this morning to drive the horse home after carrying Orrin and Rowland to their school. I think Orren is convinced you did not meddle with his horse. I have had a talk with him myself and so has R.B.H. It seems almost impossible for the horse to have come into our door yard and turn'd himself so regular without help.

I have written all I can think of little and great. So good night from your affectionate Mother
Eliza Gilmore

O.O. Howard

[Envelope]
[From] Greene Me
Octr 13
[To] Mr Oliver O Howard
Brunswick, Me

[Note 1. This is probably the wedding of John Harrison Otis, who was the son of Otis' Uncle Ensign and Aunt Martha Otis. He married Hellen Worthing. Although he was not named in this letter, it was certainly a grandchild of Grandmother Otis and a later letter by Otis (4 Nov) makes a reference to John Harrison. Public records indicate they were married but at a slightly earlier date (27 Sep 1847), so 12 Oct 1847 is probably the correct date.]

101 10/19/1847 *From:* O O Howard

To: Mrs John Gilmore

OOH-0091

Bowdoin College
Brunswick Me

So. Leeds,
Maine

Source: Bowdoin

Bowdoin Oct 1847 [19 from the postmark]

Dear mother

I was happy to receive your kind and mindful epistle on yesterday, and with alike pleasure take my pen to reply to it and continue a correspondence with my only mother and only parent. For by an interchange of sentiments and feelings through the magic influence of a pen and paper, we may mutually share each others pleasure, lighten each others burdens, happify our minds, and make life pleasant and desirable. And last of all, but not least, the mother can guide the steps of an absent son, and instill principles & precepts of which he seemingly careless & regardless can not always be unmindful for they are deeply rooted in the mind and will one day spring up & glow with a brighter luster.

I am glad to hear of so prosperous & thriving a condition at Leeds, "young men courting & geting married" & the middle aged visiting and assisting the young to build their "Barks for life" and to obtain their "first" & perhaps their only mates to aid them in making the rough & turbulent voyage of life, having confidence, love & virtue for a pilot to steer them clear from (the quick sand) slander, from rocks (the passions) on which they are sure to be shipwrecked and the "violent gulf stream" jealousy from which it would be impossible to extricate themselves once drawn in. I am also glad to hear that there are no more seeds of discord sown in the school district. And yet hope I may have a quiet & interesting school.

William Otis is the same he always has been, seldom speaks, very well liked by his classmates, not from his important or eminent stand, but from his doing no injury.

You said you wished me to make my labor a pleasure rather than a burden with which request I can & have ever complied for in the first place I voluntarily took the yoke upon me and if it perchance is attended with some difficulties the end and aim of my course will ever cheer & encourage me to press on. Yet it is not very hard or difficult to any one to pursue a course of study after he has once laid a good and thorough foundation. Being careful in the preparation of every part and doing it regularly & in order. And if he does this he will soon find himself capable of accomplishing what at first would have seemed unattainable. Also it is a pleasure for one to feel himself capable, or know that he has accomplished something which requires an expanded intellect & a cultivated mind. It is invariably the case that the more intricate & perplexing the work to be performed, the more satisfaction & pleasure is afforded to the performer.

I have engaged in no tricks played upon the freshmen, & in fact all of such initiating measures have long since passed & the freshmen are treated as well as any other members of College and even better from perhaps selfish motives. They usually, being induced by those who treat them best, join their society.

Give my love to my brothers, tell them I frequently think of them and am willing to do all I can for their welfare & happiness.

It is now Sabbath afternoon. I have attended church & heard the Harpswell minister, who exchanged with Mr Adams. He is a very interesting speaker, and a young man.

I now enjoy very good health & have ever since I returned. Write me all the news from Leeds and as soon as you can spare the time. Give my respects to Roland, father and all my friends. Tell Rowland Bailey to write me a letter if he can spend the time. With my best wishes for all and an expectation of soon returning (say five or six weeks will soon pass) I close, hoping that nature has gifted you with a good share of patience, sufficient to trace three pages of my scribbling.

From Your affectionate Son,
Oliver O. Howard

[Envelope]

[From] OO Howard Oct 1847

[Postmark] TOPSHAM Me OCT 19
[To] Mrs John Gilmore
So. Leeds,
Maine

102 11/4/1847 *From:* OO Howard

To: Mrs John Gilmore

OOH-0093

Bowdoin College,
Brunswick Me

South Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

Bowdoin College November 4th 1847

Dear Mother

I have been waiting a long time to receive a letter from you to answer, but finding myself procrastinating in vain, I have at last concluded to write.

I hope you are in health and are hindered from writing by no troubles, other than those always attendant upon labour. I know of nothing new in Brunswick except that there has been a little excitement arising from kicking the football - a rivalry between Colleges & Boarding places testing the skill of one against another comprising exercise & sport in one.

The time is fast drawing to a close when I shall again return to Leeds, whether for pleasure or contention I know not. I hope the minds of the people comprising the school district have not been prejudiced more since I left. Please write me concerning that in order that I may be prepared to meet any difficulties if there should be any.

I think I shall return home the day before thanksgiving so as to have about a week to put in order my clothes, and have a little leisure before commencing my school. Please let Rowland come so as to carry me up Wednesday. Perley will go with me.

Our studies are comparatively easy this term. We have now the addition of a theme or composition containing three or six pages once a fortnight to our last years work, but it can be accomplished like every thing else if done in <in> season, and in its order.

Has Rowland Bailey left Wayne yet? If he has, and is at home please ask him what he wishes to study this winter in order that I may accommodate him with books if I have them. How are Charley & Rodelphus pleased with the idea of my teaching them this winter. Perhaps I may have some trouble from them, thinking that I have no right to govern them.

It is very beautiful weather for so late in the fall, almost as warm as in the summer. An excellent time for farmers to do their ploughing. I suppose John Harrison [Otis] has got settled by this time and Thomas cured & has recovered his former felicity.

William appears as healthy as ever I knew him, seems to enjoy the sport of kicking football very much so he takes considerable exercise. I think he is not a very smart scholar, for he does not study much and his classmates say he does not recite remarkably well. You may send me some kind of an excuse for my weeks or nearly a week's absence at the beginning of the term in your next letter, or by the one who comes after me. Give my respects to all

From your affectionate & obd. Son
OO Howard

[Envelope]

OO Howard Nov 4th 1847

[Postmark] BRUNSWICK Me. NOV 5

[To] Mrs John Gilmore

South Leeds

103 11/5/1847 *From:* Thos Wilson

To: Friend [O.O.] Howard

OOH-0096

Houlton

Source: Bowdoin

Houlton Nov 5th 1847

Friend Howard

I address you with these few lines at this opportunity, hoping you are now realizing the full fruition of Sophomore dignity and intellectual enjoyment. I have been engaged teaching since vacation, and will probably continue until the spring term. I had a good time at vacation in visiting my friends and in fishing and hunting excursions. I am teaching a very large school now in the village amounting in number to about 80 scholars or more. It is rather hard work, but I manage them with considerable dexterity, and they pay me good wages.

I suppose you will teach this winter therefore, I shall lecture you a little, as you have not taught before I believe. Be careful the first day when you commence, to show the scholars an intention to the familiar, and an unceasing regard for order and arrangement. Prepare before hand a Program of the number of classes you intend to have in your school, and the time marked to be devoted to each class. Attend to but one thing at a time. Have a box on your desk for questions, where the scholars are at liberty to put in any thing they wish to have explained. Devote 5 minutes every morning to the reading of these questions which are contributed, and ask others which may be suggested to your mind. By this means a great deal of interest [can] be excited in your pupils.

Don't punish any if you can help it, but make it the dernier resort; suppress whispering as much as consistently it can be. Keep the boys and girls apart, and attend to both sexes with impartiality. Finally as Socrates was enjoined upon, in respect to the Athenian young men, I enjoin upon you in respect to the girls, refrain from conversing with them entirely. (Consider this last ironical, and you obtain my true meaning.)

Excuse my freedom of thus writing.

Give my best respects to your roommate Mr Perley, and A. Glitner, and others. Write to me on receiving this and inform me if you please how far you have advanced in your studies this term in latin and Greek and when you commenced in each study.

Your friend and Classmate
Thos Wilson

This is a fair specimen of my hand writing [This was repeated four more times]

104 11/11/1847 *From:* OO Howard

To: Mrs John Gilmore

OOH-0094

Bowdoin College

So. Leeds, Maine

Source: Bowdoin

Bowdoin College Nov 11 1847

Dear Mother

I am sorry to give you an opportunity for a reproof as regards my frequency and the length of my letters yet I acknowledge it as just. And will endeavour to mend the past by more constancy in future. When I wrote my last letter I was much in haste, and ended when the bell called me to recitation, and I seldom can retake a letter after once left and finish it. It seems something the same as to leave my composition or theme half written and afterwards finish it, which I never do for I lose the connexion of thought and expression which I before had. So if I then finish it it seems to be dry and uninteresting. Such were my thoughts when I folded and packed my last letter to you. Thinking that such an one would be more acceptable than none and intending to follow it quickly with another. And I do not always feel in a mode required for writing a good or a long letter because I usually take up my pen to write after having accomplished my other duties (this being the time I have leisure), so I either feel tired or cross and you can judge how hard it is for a person out of humour to write a pleasant or entertaining epistle. Yet because my letters vary as my feelings differ, think not my intentions less good, or my pleasure in interesting my mother and my friends less great.

You spoke respecting my returning home thanksgiving day. I have resolved since I wrote not to come so early, but as Perley wishes to return home before his school commences I shall request you to send for me the Wednesday before my school commences that is three weeks from yesterday.

In regard to those cigars. William borrowed some money of me to pay his stage fare not having enough left after paying his expenses at Yarmouth to get home, so he did not wish to let his father know of the bill, his expenses having been higher at Yarmouth than they should have been. And when I let him have it I thought he would immediately get the money of his father and send it to me in a letter, but instead of that I did not see much prospect of getting it at all. So to "make a virtue of necessity" I told him as Silas was oweing him something he might bring me a box of cigars in payment of his account. But he says he paid Silas the money for the Box and when I got here there was but two bunches in the box, so I told him I would allow him 50 cts for what there were. And instead of putting it down on his accounts as he should for his stage fare, he put it against me for a part of a box of cigars. I do not wish you to say any thing about it farther to any other than me. For William has lately settled it & also paid me for the books he bought of me.

Uncle Stilman's [Stillman Howard] forebodings may be fulfilled, yet my courage is not abated, nor am I disheartened. For, though Oscar Appreciates my judgement in comparison with Seth's I may from necessity if not from natural ability, yet accomplish something and have my labors crowned with success. But if it is not to be so the blame will rest only on myself and you my mother will be free from implication for you have striven and counseled only for my welfare & lasting good. If Property fades me while I have health I shall not suffer. But if Uncle Stilman had had his way I should have been penniless 'ere this. Before I was capable of taking care of myself, when all exertions would have been fruitless. Yet I still recollect his sayings & carefully appreciate his good will & good intentions.

I am glad you have so good an opinion of me as relates to my teaching and hope you will not be deceived. Though I am hasty and passionate, yet I have some reason and sincerely desire that I may by self restraint as well as listening to good & wholesome advice & admonition so nurture & cultivate it that if when it becomes mature I shall not be so easily affected by opposition and vexations crossings. But may survey all things with more considerations and coolness. Still think not I do not appreciate your motives in so kindly admonishing me when you who are wiser & older see defects & failings. As good as I usually am for vindicating self, I never have yet convinced my own heart of my perfection, nor do I even hold to an approximation to that, which has never been possessed by mortals since the fall of man.

Give my love to my brothers and may they so notice and criticize my conduct as not to fall in to my errors. And if my uncle's predictions are fulfilled in me, may they never fall upon them. Frequently I think if I had been penniless I should have learned prudence and my prospects would have been brighter. Or I happy in ignorance accept the kindest wishes of an ungrateful, though affectionate son.

OO Howard

[Envelope]

[From] OO Howard Nov 11th 1847

[Postmark] BRUNSWICK Me. NOV 12

[To] Mrs John Gilmore

So. Leeds, Maine

105 12/23/1847 *From:* J. N. Jewett

To: Mr Oliver O Howard

OOH-0095

Palmyra Me

Leeds, Maine

Source: Bowdoin

Palmyra Dec 23d 1847

Friend Howard

Although I have delayed somewhat to address you, it has not resulted either from disinclination to do so or forgetfulness of you, but rather from motives of self-interest. It is exceedingly pleasant to receive a communication from a friend at any & all times. When I left Brunswick I had made promises to a number of my fellow students that they should hear from me sometime during the winter. A part of those promises I have fulfilled, others yet remain to be performed. I have been trying to divide them along in such a manner that I might be gratified by the reception of their letters for the whole of the term I stop up here. You will of course call that good policy and that is what has brought your letter to about a middle position.

Moreover I suppose you might hear through Friend Perley of my situation. I thot a little delay between his & yours would be quite as pleasing to you & perhaps to him so, otherwise I should have sent them together. This you understand is my excuse & doubtless in your mind it is a very good one. No one delights in the perusal of an Epistle from a friend more than I do. No one perhaps feels a deeper & livelier interest in their progress; no one rejoices more in the prosperity or sympathises more heartily with them in adversity than myself. If I by freak of fortune, or efforts of my own attain to any considerable degree of comfort or enjoyment it is doubly valuable if shared in by them. & if by any misfortune I happen to fail in my endeavors I miss of obtaining the object for which I eagerly strove, my misery is in no part assuaged by beholding those I have <learned> to prize plunged into like circumstances.

So far as my feeble exertions can benefit them, they are at their disposal. Let them call upon me if I can aid them by my council, efforts or effects they shall be released. I do not say this boasting of my philanthropy, but rather to demonstrate to you geometrically the proposition that letters from you as well as from others of my College Acquaintances are full of interest & pleasure. For if my disposition gives exercise to such feelings in respect to them as a matter of course I cannot wish to be in ignorance of their actual conditions. Yes! Let me hear from them as often as possible. I labor under no apprehensions of wearisomeness to be produced by the too frequent arrival of their communications. A single letter affords me a fountain of enjoyments from which I can drink long & refreshing draughts until the reception of another. Particularly as I feel anxious to hear from absent friends when my own circumstances, like those with which I am now blessed are productive of any thing but pleasurable emotions.

But dropping this subject I will proceed to give an account of myself. I arrived in St. Albans on Saturday night after I left you on Friday morn making a stay of one Day & Night in Waterville. The next Monday I came down here & on Tuesday I commenced my school. The reports I heard of it were none the most favorable, & I anticipated a severe time. Have between 50 & 60 scholars. Although the school was represented to me as the worst in about "these diggins" I have succeeded in getting through with almost 6 weeks. I have not had the slightest difficulty. I have 2 weeks more to keep here & then I go to another district <in [missing torn]> the same Town where I shall probably be detained about 6 or 7 weeks. This will carry me about 2 weeks into the Spring Term. I shall be exceedingly glad when the time comes which will deliver me from the troubles & perplexities of a School Teachers life in the Country & restore me to the pleasures & profit of my College studies & acquaintances.

But how do you "come on". How do those large boys train, whose <shouts> preceded you? If they don't mind "give it to them". What do you think of Pedagogueing? Is it as pleasurable as you anticipated? I certainly wish you much prosperity & happiness, but if you have it it will be more than I get here. But don't meddle with the girls! They are dangerous creatures I believe.

Direct your letter to Palmyra and respectfully soliciting a speedy answer. I subscribe myself Yours Truly
J. N. Jewett.

Tell Perley that all the advice I send him of this time is to keep clear of the girls especially Sarah.

An appology is due you for such paper as this. It is the best and all I have & all I can get at present. J.A.J.

[Envelope]

[From] Palmyra Me Dec 27 [Paid] 5

[To] Mr Oliver O Howard

Leeds

Maine