
189 4/5/1850

From: Eliza Gilmore

To: Son [O O Howard]

OOH-0181

Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds April, 5th 1850

My Dear Son,

I do not think I have exercised the privilege (I so much esteem) of writing to those I love this spring as usual but I can hardly tell how my time goes, but think now the traveling is breaking up I shall have more time to myself than I have had through the winter. I went to Hallowel the Middle of March, took Rodelphus with me, was gone two nights from home. Found our friends there all well and in good spirits.

Had just received a letter from Addison Martin date Sacramento City Jan. 29. He said his health was good and ever had been since he left Hallowel. Had run lucky in business, had their goods well stored before the great rise of water in that city. Said he saw Roland Gilmore the day before and that his (Roland's) health was good & had never received any letter from home. Thought he should come home next fall.

Charles Turner is now at home making a final preparation for going to California. Has bought his ticket. Will leave Leeds next Monday. Betsey Colier came here from Boston ten days since and is assisting Mrs Turner for Charles. She brought a letter from your aunt [Ann] Lee which was very full of loving words for all of us, and expressed a great desire to visit us, and Sarah would visit us if you would write her when your vacation would be and you be at home. She says if you or any of your family should be coming to Boston you could find us by enquiring for No 785 Washington St, their Boarding house, or Silas place of business 116 State Street.

Warren Woodman was here on business not long since and stopt a short time, or a few hours. He told me where Mrs Lee's house was and that she pays eight dollars per week for herself and Sarah's and Silas. Silas's salary is two hundred and fifty dollars a year, and supports himself out of it.

I spoke with Eliza Ann Jennings at church on the Sabbath and enquired after Orville. She said they had just received letters from him and his health was good and ever had been since he left home. Our family have all had good health this spring. Henry Gilbert has taken Mrs Jones place on the farm and is delighted with it. He has brought an invalid daughter a pining away apparently in the consumption.

Doc Lord called here this week with a subscription paper for obtaining money for supporting preaching. He had one hundred and thirty dollars subscribed when here. I have little hope of ever having much preaching at the center. I should be glad to live where I could attend meeting with my family and I think it would give a new spring to my feelings and enjoyments.

Charles has little or nothing to do. I wish he had gone to Kents Hill with R.B.H. He is gathering sap and making sugar for his own eating. Rodelphus is assisting him in bringing it, and managing to get all the sugar he can to eat and drinks more of the sap than Charles would have him. Charles is expecting a letter from you every mail. I hope you will write him. It would do him good. He has written a long letter to Roland A Gilmore and will send it by C. Turner.

Your father will enclose in this a ten dollar bill to you. He is assisting Mrs Lothrop to day.

I should think from the general tenor of your letter you were enjoying yourself well. Your time must be all occupied and if it is filled up to advantage is a happy way of spending time. I have not any definite idea of what your calculations are after graduating. I am in hopes some prospect will open for you that will be for your advancement in every respect. I know that I have much reason for a cheerful grateful sense of present favors but I scarcely look upon the favors. I am constantly looking at what is wrong and wishing it could be different. I do not make myself miserable, but I am determined not to be satisfied with the way I live, and I think it is inconsistant with a common understanding to be satisfied to live and spend their time as I do.

You spoke of Maria. Have you seen her and how is she. Tell William he has my good wishes. Hope his health is good. I have called at Ensign's once since you went from home. I called at Mrs Davies once yes twice. Both times on Uncle's [Ezra Stinchfield] account to see if anything could be done for him but have gained nothing in

his behalf. I wish I could for I think if we could support him a few years, out of his ten children some of them would take care of him. Mrs Davy has talked with him on the subject of being a public charge. He says he will go off into the woods and die alone. The idea is revolting to any of us to be a public charge, although it is to be expected after such a life as he has led, but I can not view him any other than a pleasant man as I never saw him otherwise. I suppose Otis will say why need Mother trouble me with her feelings about her uncle. There is no reason why I should, but <> know out of the abundance of the heart then <> speaketh.

Saturday morning

Yours affectionately Eliza Gilmore

190 4/5/1850

From: Unknown

To: Friend Howard

OOH-0182

Chesterfield County
Petersburg [Va]

Source: Bowdoin

Chesterfield County Petersburg April 5th [1850]

Dear friend Howard

it has been a long time since we last met. And perhaps it will be unexpected to you to receive this epistle from me in this southern clime. But yet feeling a desire to learn some what of your welfare as you climb the rugged hill of science I venture to set my pen to work hoping better success in the way of an answer than with my last. Last winter a year ago while teaching in the town of Gardner I wrote you but have heard nothing from it since whether you never recd it or whether you had forgotten your old chum I have never seemed able to decipher. Nevertheless the General would once more inform you that he is yet alive and kicking out of hell and out preying ground, & if you are the same he would like to hear and if not please send him your card as a token of remembrance. Well by the date of this you will perceive that I am in old Virginia and no where else. The land of pistols bewey kives boldogs hogs & niggers offisseating in the old capacity of a pedagogue have been teaching three weeks have for each chollar 12,00 for the turm of ten months. I have fool school. I have ben travelling all winter. Visited the cities of NY stoped 4 days Philade stoped five weeks Willmington, Del. Soped 4 weeks Baltimore, stoped one day Washington stoped two weeks visited our old friend Whitney. & all the interesting scans of this grate focus of our mighty republic. Shook the hand of the Pres & his lady in the big east room. But the best of all was I had the plesure of listning to a four hours speach from the Henry Clay. Also a different times to tha elequence of Msr's Webster, Calhoon & Benton. I from there I came to Richmond va then down to Petersburg and commenced scholl. I am pleasantly situated in evry rspect, have a good rom & evry thing to my hand from a bootjack up to nigger watr. But now in regard to what has been when you and I were bohrys together & Frank Sarah Aley Mary Hause &c were pals together. Does fond recollection revirt you back to the good old days of C Freys writeing School old Kuals lectures &c? If so consider on your past life and be wise you old sinner. Morne & lement for the many opportunities you have let slip of. Receive in your share of the temporal blessing of this world. AH the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak (or rather limber). But the business was Frank was already primed and all she wanted was for you to perform your duty, but finding that you would not she, but stop. I will not prolong a recital that mite wound the feelings of a friend. Pardon me for this tuching upon so delecate a point. I saw Frank but a short time before I started from Me. She looked as fresh as a new blone rose. Give my best love to all of my acquaintance at Bowden especial remembrance to Spencer Stone Ashton Mac Eaton Orville &c

192 4/14/1850 *From:* O O Howard

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0184

Bowd College

Source: Bowdoin

Bowd College Apr 14th 1850

Dear Mother,

I am sorry to find that you are not happy for when one is discontented it is almost impossible to have in store a great amount of happiness. But experience must have taught you, that there is not anything in outward circumstances which can make the contented hurt. Wealth will not do it; idleness cannot; I know that it is an unpleasant thing for one who wishes it, to be deprived of the privilege of attending church: but there would be a thousand unthought of evils that would follow a remove to a village or a city. The child is exposed to ten times the temptations.

I am now thankful that my first years were spent on a farm. There I seeded & strengthened my constitution - there I formed habits of industry; and by maturing thus early my physical strength. I have laid a foundation upon which I may erect a more respectable mental structure. And I find it to be a matter of general remark, that farmers sons make the most industrious & persevering men. The country is the best place in the world.

There is really no need of great anxiety, no need of working too hard. I certainly think mother you ought to be contented. A person's life is never slavish, unless that person thinks it so. If we are contented, thankful, & cheerful how easy & light is work, as the little boy said, "it is only play"! Then cheer up, mother, and let the cheerful spirit free from care, shine into your heart and dissipate all the fancied bitterness of your lot. For closely connected with the mother's happiness is the happiness of the children. Perchance success may crown my future efforts: and then your cherished wishes may be fulfilled; for certainly it is the duty of gratitude, as well as affection for a son to repay the thousand favors which have been extended unasked and to recompense the unremitting care & love, which have been his only nurture and support from infancy to youth & manhood.

I wrote to Uncle John Otis, the other day, requesting him to recommend me to some situation, where I could find lucrative employment as well as a chance for intellectual improvement. I wish to study a year or two before I commence studying my profession; for a superior education will be the secret of my success, if I do succeed. I probably am as well calculated for a lawyer as for any thing. I can study what is dry & "borous" to the most, without a great tax upon my patience, & I find that the cheerless pages of metaphysical treatises are far from being irksome. What is learned by the intelligent by labor, is usually of some value.

I have planned out two courses to myself: one is apparently expedient; the other is desirable. The one that seems to me to be expedient, is to continue my literary, metaphysical & scientific studies for two or three yrs, and then commence the study of law and throw my whole energy & acquired knowledge into a professional course. The other & the one that would suit my taste better than my ability is to be a literary man. If I had been older when I entered College, & pursued a different course, my chance to become a College instructor would have been proportionally increased. So unless such a chance unexpectedly opens itself to me I shall steadily press on in the first course, which I have laid out for myself.

If Uncle does not find a better occupation for me, I probably shall teach an Academy the first year not only that I may make money, but that I may review Virgil & my Greek. I already have an end in view, but the particular mode of attaining it matters not. I do not plan to waver & vascilate in an undecided manner, for I should then most assuredly turn out be nobody, but with determination (fixedness of purpose) and untiring perseverance difficulties if not impossibilities may be easily overcome. I am glad you are trying to do something for Uncle E. Stinchfield [Ezra], for, even if a man has always taken a censurable course, it is not a Christian spirit to let him suffer the pain of shame & <> after he is <really> unable to assist himself. There is a self-reproach which will follow the vicious man to his grave & that is punishment enough without our endeavoring to increase his sufferings either by doing or omitting to do, what our hearts tell us we ought.

Remember me to all the family. Your affectionate son
O.O. Howard

191 4/14/1850 *From:* Uncle John Otis

To: Mr Oliver Otis Howard

OOH-0183

Washington [DC]

Brunswick

Source: Bowdoin

Washington April 14, '50

My dear Otis

I have just received your letter. It will be difficult to give you more than general advice. I am glad to learn that you are making good improvement of your present opportunity, for the time past cannot be recalled; and though deficiencies may be supplied, the great object of having a fair standing as a scholar when you graduate is lost. You will be young perhaps too young to commence a profession when you graduate. Your own views and tastes must be the guide to direct your determination to a great extent.

I had supposed you would be inclined to study law. I am not particularly partial to that profession though I am aware it has often laid the foundation for success in life - as often perhaps as any other profession. The medical profession is much crowded & very laborious. If you can get a good school or academy for the first year after you graduate, it will give you an opportunity of improving your education more than study without instruction & in that year you can make up your mind what to do. This too will give you a chance of getting back some of the money you have expended in your education, and which you must yet expend in getting a profession.

I suppose you have had no idea of going into trade & I have no doubt you could succeed as a merchant, and perhaps make more money than in a crowded profession. The great west after all holds out inducements both of a pecuniary and political character beyond any thing in New England. I know not what a year may bring forth in California; but I should not advise you to think of going there in its present state. I think Addison stands a good chance of making a fortune if no accident befalls him.

I am glad to have a letter from you & you can take the opportunity of giving me more directly your own views & then I can be better prepared to advise you.

I shall always feel a strong interest in your welfare. Remember always to have the approval of your mother & Col. Gilmore in whatever you do. I have a high opinion of their judgment.

We are all very well.

Your Affectionate Uncle
John Otis

Mr. Oliver Otis Howard
Brunswick

193 4/30/1850 *From:* O O Howard

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0185

Brunswick

Source: Bowdoin

Brunswick Apr 30, 1850.

Dear Mother

The term is now almost through. We commenced our reviews to day in every thing, and heartily glad am I of it, for I begin to grow a little tired. We did not finish our Astronomy (what I was obliged to make up) till last Saturday evening. Those who were out of College last fall with myself, have been to Prof Cleavelands house to recite during the whole of this term. I think that I passed as good an examination on every thing, as I could have done, if I had been here the whole term.

I have called on Mrs Harmon, twice or three times. The last time I found Miss Joana Gilbert from Leeds there. She does not appear in a remarkably good state of health.

Uncle John answered the letter, which I wrote him, and says that it would be better for me to teach school a year after I graduate before attempting any thing else. And as much as I dislike teaching I believe I shall be obliged to follow his advice without some equally lucrative employment opens itself to me. So, I shall be on the watch, to see if I can get a school or Academy, somewhere between Maine & Louisiana. I had an offer to day to commence the Litchfield High School, next June & keep it at least a year. But it commenced too early, and I do not like the place very much. It is the same, where so many young men went from Leeds (this) last fall. I had another proposal the other day, but it suited me full as little. I may, like the dainty Crane, have, from necessity, to take up with the "miserable worms", at last, but I will not stay out of College any more for the highest wages.

I have written & committed my part for this spring's exhibition. It is not very good, but like the short soldier, "it will pass muster". The exhibition will be on Tuesday evening, one fortnight from this evening. There are usually four or five Junior parts, but this year the College government have sent away three of the performers and the other will not perform alone. The cause of their being sent away was this. From fast day through the week, in the Junior year, classes have been in the habit of "cutting", that is, of staying out of recitation. This year the government undertook to put a stop to it. So the night after Fast Prof Smyth, hearing a noise in one of the Junior rooms broke through the door, without ceremony, and found 10 Juniors, sat down & took their names and commanded them all to go into recitation the next morning. This he did in anticipation of offence, before they had done anything. The next morning he did not find a Junior there, and none were seen till the next Monday, except William Otis. On Friday he had seated himself in the cars to go to Bath. Just before they started, Prof Goodwin tapped him on the shoulder, & told him he would accompany him to the President's room. He went & was sentenced to go to Bath, but was again recalled the next week. Nine were sent away for six months, the best scholars & "best fellows" in the class. Thus much for following precedents.

Give my love to all the family. I think now of going home by the way of Hallowell, to make them my long promised visit but even now it will be a short one. My money is more reduced than I thought it would be but if the exhibition does not exceed its common cost, I shall try to manage my passage home with what I have. The Juniors being gone I do not know whether we can ask them to pay their proportional part of the expenses or not. I have not heard from Rowland of late, and in fact I have not from any one else. If you write again, you must send it soon enough for me to get it next week.

Your affectionate Son
O. O. Howard