
194 6/9/1850

From: Oliver O Howard

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0186

Bowd Coll

Source: Bowdoin

Bowd Coll June 9th 1850

Dear Mother,

I have taken my pen on this beautiful sabbath morning, to write you a few words, and relieve you of any anxiety which you might have on account of the rather dubious state of health with which I left home. I am perfectly recovered. The plaster & salts acting in concert have been very effective and I believe I feel as well now as I ever did in my life. After I left Charlie I crossed the river and was obliged to spend two hours wandering up & down amusing myself in different ways until the stage came along. Peleg was in the stage, and Mrs Waite & her daughter came with us as far as Lewiston. We took dinner at the house of Mrs Hicks, a sister of Mrs Waite. Peleg & I started from Lewiston in the afternoon train but were obliged to stop in N. Yarmouth all night as the advertisements were incorrect. If we had stoped in Lewiston all night we might have gone to N. Yarmouth early in the morning, stoped nearly all day & arrived here late in the afternoon. As we came we were fortunate enough to get into Prof. Cleavelands lecture at ½ past 8 o'clock, saving ourselves a schooling thereby.

I called on Mrs Harmon last evening, & learned that she was going to Leeds to spend the summer or, at least, a portion of it. By accident I carried away from home Charlie's handkerchief, and thinking he would want it I shall send it up by Mrs H__ next Wednesday. Their recent child (5 weeks of age) is a little girl. Joan Gilbert, being here, is going to Leeds with her. The past week has been warm & pleasant enough, and I suppose father has improved it in the way of planting. The greatest real trouble we have here is from musketoes. They are determined we shall not sleep after daylight. They must be more abundant than usual, or else loftier in their notions for they never have molested us in the third story before. I find it pretty hard to decide whether it is best for me to seek a school at the South, where I may have high wages, or take up with such wages as I can get from some Academy in Maine. I did not wish to teach but one year and I wished to get high wages.

Mr Tuck, in the House of Representatives from N.H., wrote to Mr Townsend of our class, that he could get a place for him in Washington for four months at \$80.00 per month, commencing right off. He also said that he would be nominally employed from 9 o'clock till three, the rest of the time he could have to himself to keep up his studies so as to graduate in September.

If I could have such a place after I had graduated I should like it much, but I would not go just now even for \$80.00 per month. Mr Tuck wrote that Townsend would be in a good place to secure a school and perhaps Uncle might secure one for me if he chose. I believe I shall write to him and let him do as he will.

How is Mr Gilberts daughter? Give my love to all our family. I cannot decide on a subject for a Commencement part & if I do not soon, and write it I shall be kept here after the end of 8 weeks until it is written & prepared. It is now nearly meeting time, so good bye.

Yr Affectionate son,
Oliver O Howard

195 6/15/1850 *From:* O O Howard

To: Brother [Rowland B
Howard]

OOH-0187

Bowd College

Source: Bowdoin

Bowd College June 15th 1850.

Dear Brother,

Having now been in Brunswick a fortnight, I begin to think it time to write you and learn, if possible, how you are "making it" at Readfield. I received your Catalogue & order of exercises. I hope you will do Henry Play justice, and yourself honor at the coming exhibition. I should like to be there, but it is not, in the nature of things, possible. I have not been able to decide upon a subject for a Commencement part as yet, and I fear, if I do not pretty soon, that I shall be obliged to stop here after the end of this term until I shall have selected my subject & written my part. After I left you at North Wayne, I returned to Mr <Samson's> in time to get my dinner and while I was waiting to get my wagon fixed, Mr Coolidge and his lady returned. He looked very smart & happy & perhaps he was (?).

I went to Livermore the next day (or Wednesday rather), & staid till Thursday afternoon, then going home. The rain kept me close till the next Monday night. Perley came down to Leeds, on Monday in the midst of the rain to get a new wagon at Mr White's and wishing to "break it in" rode down to my father's. The rain stopped pouring just about long enough for Peleg & me to go to Livermore that night. This time I found Mrs Waite & her daughter at N. Turner Bridge. The next day, Elizabeth & I had a wagon ride in the forenoon and in the afternoon, four of us (Peleg & his cousin with us) had a splendid horseback ride. Elizabeth rode your colt & managed him first rate. One time he kicked at the horse, on which I rode, four times starting into a run at the same time, but did no damage. We rode about seven miles.

The next day I carried Elizabeth home, down through the center of Leeds, exciting great curiosity & much wonderment. Staid at home till Thursday afternoon & then returned to Livermore, went home again alone Friday morning, and helped plant corn Friday & Saturday, making me lame and sore enough. This is a short sketch of my wanderings, the only vexation being the toll-keeper. He troubled me considerably.

Two of our class have been suspended for drinking, this term. If any individual in the class is known to drink, even a glass of Liquor, he will be suspended or expelled immediately. The Government are decisive.

Mr Shepley, the teacher at N. Yarmouth, is said to be one of the finest teachers in the State. Some one who was there at the last examination, said, that he never knew a class, who had not entered college to pass so perfect an examination. That is the place for you to finish your preparatory course. You can come here & get as many of my things as you wish - looking glass, clock, bed, desk & thousand of little things, and carry them up by the Freight Cars for almost nothing. I have not decided when to go, nor what I shall do as soon as I graduate but I must find a place as soon as possible.

Write me how you "get-off" at exhibition and whether mother is there or not. My respects to your chum & those with whom I am acquainted and take to yourself the best wishes of your brother.

Yrs Affectionately
O.O.Howard

196 6/20/1850 *From:* John Otis

To: Oliver Otis Howard

OOH-0188

Washington

Source: Bowdoin

Washington June 20 1850

My dear Nephew,

From what William writes me today, I am of opinion that he will not be accepted at West Point on account of the narrowness of his chest, and want of general physical strength. The matter was not fully settled & of course I wish you to say nothing of it until it is fully settled.

What I wish to know is whether in case he is not accepted, you would like to have me recommend you or Rowland Bailey. The advantages you would have are a good constitution & strength for endurance, & you have a good acquaintance with the languages & are fond of mathematics. You would probably be able to obtain your degree, if you went to West Point now. The wages are \$24 per month. That is, a four year residence & expenses of all kind paid &c. The applicant must be full sixteen years of age. Is that Rowland's? He must not be over 21.

Please write me your own thoughts before you apply at home or know the decision here.

This is to be truly confidential.

Yours sincerely
John Otis

Oliver Otis Howard

197 6/24/1850 *From:* Oliver O Howard

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0189

Bowd. Coll.

Source: Bowdoin

Bowd. Coll. June 24th 1850

Dear Mother,

I believe I have not received a letter from home this term, but I will not complain for perhaps it is not possible for you to write with your many duties. My health has been very good since my return, and I hope the same good fortune has attended you. I suppose Rowland is at home by this time. I wrote him a letter, but he may not have received it before he got home. He talked somewhat of going to Harpswell after the end of his term on the Hill. If he would come down & be here on the fourth of July I could go about with him considerably. He could see N. Yarmouth as he came through and also tell me, what of my furniture & housekeeping materials he might want. I shall be obliged to know before Commencement so as to sell what he does not want. You had better let him come, for it will be for his health & he can select any of my books which he may want.

I wrote to Uncle John again yesterday, and am in hopes he will be able to point me to some good situation. Townsend has secured a place in the General P.O. department where he is to have \$80.00 per month for four months & perhaps longer, with the privilege of returning to graduate next September. Townsend is very fortunate for a lazy man, but will fulfill as high duties now as he ever will. I do not envy his good position, for he is a clever fellow without energy, & poor, and must have a living in some way.

I believe I have not had a letter from a single person this term, but perhaps it is as well for I do not have to write as many. I presume Mrs Harmon has called upon you before this time, at any rate I told her so to do. How does Mr Gilbert's daughter endure this hot weather? William is at West Point. A young man who is there, wrote to a member of the Freshman Class here, and mentioned in no favorable language, a representative of this College, "Otis" by name. William always appears awkward to Strangers, yet I think they will like him better as soon as they become acquainted with him, if that should take place.

Independent day will be celebrated in this place so that I shall not be obliged to leave this place as father says "to see the Elephant".

Peleg & I wish to get a chance in a large Academy together if we can. Give my love to all. I wrote a letter to Laura Howard yesterday, and she may be obliged to get you & Rowland to unravel a part of it, for I wrote in much haste. If she does you may tell her, it is not worth the trouble to decipher. It is now recitation time & I must stop awhile (but while I think of it) tell Rowland to get that hat of mine and use it, for I have got another, "a palm leaf". Tell him also if he cannot answer my letter in person to write me as soon as he can. And Charlie he must write me again. You must make up your mind to come to Commencement. I have a quiet little boarding place, where I have boarded so long that they would be very glad to have you stop & perhaps you & Mrs Harmon can agree, for Public Houses would be too much crowded for comfort.

Remember me to all my friends if I have any out of the family circle, and write as soon as you can.

Your affectionate Son
Oliver O Howard

198 6/28/1850 *From:* John Otis

To: Mr Oliver Otis Howard

OOH-0190

Washington

Brunswick

Source: Bowdoin

Washington, June 28, 1850

My dear Nephew,

I received your letter yesterday, & your letter in answer to mine this morning. I made the suggestion to you for your good, but if you do not feel a decided inclination for the situation I would not accept it. Your college education is the inducement for you to accept it. The studies at West Point are fairly mathematical, physical & philosophical. The education in languages should be had either before or after. You would have the advantage of having it before. Depend upon it you would be put to your full exertions for the four years to take such a rank as I would have you take.

I do not agree with you in believing the military profession stands low, & your notions do not compare with mine, but this is a practical question. It is whether under the circumstances, you could forego the chance of professional prospects, spend four years at West Point & then on to the army, take your chance for a professorship or other appointment. There are over twenty members of Congress, who graduated at West Point.

The chances of success for life for one who takes a high stand, there is in my opinion as good or better than any other course of life. I have said this not to influence your determination. That you must think upon naturally & then decide. You will not be obliged to go on till the last of August & will not be in the way of your having your degree. But I must decide in a short time, say in ten days. Will Rowland Bailey be <> request?

Your affectionate
Uncle John Otis

Mr Oliver Otis Howard
Brunswick

Write in a few days, say in a week from this time. William will return in a few days.