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200 8/24/1850 *From:* Otis Howard

*To:* Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0192

New York City

*Source:* Bowdoin

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New York City Aug 24th, 1850

Dear Mother,

As you will notice by the above, I am in the city of New York. I stopped in Portland till Monday night, as I intended. At 7 on Monday evening Lizzie & myself set out in the Steamer John Marshall for Boston. It was a glorious night, but we remained on Deck together only about an hour & a half, for Lizzie began to be quite sick. I helped her below as soon as possible, but the poor girl had rather an uncomfortable time of it, getting only about 2 hours sleep. I had a state room with a young man of my acquaintance & a boy, slept soundly after I could persuade myself to retire, till day-break, when I arose "bright & early" and found that we were just coming into Boston Harbor. The air was <clear > and the water perfectly smooth. I enjoyed the scenery much, but should have enjoyed it more, had there been some one by me sufficiently acquainted to point out to me the different islands, forts, &c giving their names.

We were soon in the busy, bustling, narrow, crooked streets of Boston. A carriage drove us & baggage to "Le Grange Place." Here we stopped at a very quiet boarding house kept by a young widow lady (Mrs Hyder). The beauty of the whole was that we stopped two days & two nights, and all she charged was \$1.60 cts. Tuesday we wandered about over the City in the forenoon, conducted by Lizzie's cousin. I left them however at 11 o'clock, and went to East Cambridge in search of my relatives & quondam friends, Olive's family (Mrs Mount & all) "had gone down East", excepting her (Olive's) husband.

I found Aunt Ann, quietly boarding in East Cambridge, made her a short "call" and returned to Boston, promising to return with Lizzie at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, which I did. Aunt Ann was as agreeable as <>. But I fear me much "the first impressions" which Lizzie made upon her rather too exacting nature, might not have been as favorable as we could wish, for the poor child had scarcely recovered from sea sickness & want of sleep. We returned to Boston at half past 5, and after making a visit to a friend of Lizzie's, we returned to "Le Grange Place", somewhat weary, and not very well pleased with Boston.

After a good nights rest we were in a little better spirits, and much more disposed to be pleased with the strange things of the busy city. Wednesday, we went to Mount Auburn, taking in Aunt Ann at East Cambridge on our way. We passed the Colleges, going through Old Cambridge. I think Mount Auburn surpasses any place I ever visited in the beauty of its grounds. I will not attempt a description for probably you have been there yourself. If you have, no description is necessary. The splendid monuments, mounds, chapel, walks, trees & flowers cannot fail to impress the stranger with emotions of pleasure & admiration mingled with awe. We saw the tomb soon to be the receptacle of Webster. We returned & in the afternoon visited the Commons, public gardens & state house. From the cupola of the State house we had a view of Boston entirely & its harbor, & also of all the surrounding cities.

On Thursday morning I left Lizzie with rather a heavy heart. She started in the cars for Portland at 7 o'clock. I for New York by express train at ½ past 7. We came through without stopping more than ten minutes at a place. I found John Ally on Board the cars, who preceded me from Our District at West Point. With a friend & an acquaintance the time passed very pleasantly till we arrived in New York at half past four o'clock. He advises me to keep away from West Point till the 28th as he thinks it will be better for me, that to be there for two or three days to be knocked about before the studies commence.

I found Mr Sargent & Silas. The former is a perfect gentleman, moral, steady and intelligent. He is engaged in large & profitable business. "He thinks every thing of Sarah, but knows just what Silas is, over whom he has much influence. He seems to regard him as a brother, and as such takes care of his interest which I fear Silas if left to himself would sadly neglect. I think Silas will be able with \$400.00 to clear himself, i.e. keep out of debt. Silas is good hearted without principle or stability, but could not be in a better situation than he now is with the two Messrs Sargent's for companions. He attends to his business regularly & cheerfully. His danger lies in his love of forming friends, meeting & taking strangers for <> companions. Mr Sargent (Frank) carried me to the Theater last evening, the first I ever attended. I was disappointed for I had expected more, more thrilling & effective acting. The Hall & saloons were rich & splendid. I shall not go again while here.

I have been "prudent of my money." I bought a watch, however, of Mr Chas Henry Waite, which he had and carried long - a good one for twelve dollars. Hence my deposit will not be more than \$45.00. Alley says that my money is better in my pocket. He made no deposit & brought away \$150.00 at the end of the course. He cleared over a hundred. He told me many things. He says that he went through without drinking, but had to be careful in the selection of his companions. He gave me a list of cadets to whom he would recommend me. He has been ordered to Santa Fe & is on his way. Says I can take the first stand if I choose, but shall have some who will "dispute the ground with me." I left a Rowland's shirt at Mrs Waites at Portland, which he must go & get when he goes to Yarmouth. Lizzie wishes to see him & make his acquaintance.

Give my love to all the family. New York city cannot be described. It is so large that I don't try to see it, but sit still & write letters. I shall start for W.P. Monday morning at 7 o'clock. Good bye till I get there. Yr affectionate son.

Otis

Alleys class was 120 to commence, 44 to graduate. Aunt Ann wants to go to live with grandmother after Henry Leaves for Portland

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201 8/28/1850 *From:* O. O. Howard

*To:* Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0193

West Point

*Source:* Bowdoin

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West Point Aug 28th '50

Dear Mother

I am here - came on Monday last after having staid in N. York over the sabbath. I had a most beautiful sail up the river - arrived here about 10, found Warren Lothrop immediately. He is well & in pretty good spirits. Nobody can form any idea of military discipline, only those who are or have been subjected to it. But I will not tell you how I like, till my greenness has worn off, so that I may speak unbiased by the severity of my last "Drill".

The companies are all in their encampments but will move to the "Barracks" i.e. the place where they room. It is a glorious place here. Ladies & gentlemen here from all parts of the United States. My class about one hundred. Have not passed my examination yet. It is a change indeed from the Senior Class at College to the 4th Class here. I shall soon, however, be able to make myself at home. As a scholar I have not much doubt of "carrying the palm". But as a soldier! The extreme neatness! Not a speck of rust on the gun or on your clothes.

I shall soon be able to give you a minute description of every thing but cannot while in the Camp, for my time is not at my own disposal. Not a drop of Liquor is sold or allowed on the Point, but a few & perhaps many get men to send it secretly to them from N. York, which they pay for during their vacation, so it is said. It cannot be drunk here as in College. Should an officer know of a young man's drinking, he is punished peremptorily & severely according to the military fashion.

If I had been here two months I should now begin to enjoy myself, but I expect to be a little homesick until I get into the Barracks, where I can have my trunk & some Books for here we are allowed neither while in the Camp. I sleep upon the tent floor, upon the ground wrapped in my Blanket. My health is good, my face long.

My love to all my friends. Write to Lizzie and tell her that I tent with 3 strangers & she must not think that I have forgotten her if she does not hear from me, till we get into the Barracks. Write to me soon.

Yr affectionate son  
O. O. Howard

Direct  
Cadet O.O. Howard  
West Point