
309 7/1/1851

From: W. L. Lothrop

To: Otis [O O Howard]

OOH-0289

West Point

West Point

Source: Bowdoin

[July 1, 1851] [written in pencil]

My dear Otis

Berry handed me a \$1.00 last evening, saying it was to pay; or be paid for a package. I do not understand it. I have no recollection about it. Please send me a note, & jog my memory. I received a letter from home yesterday - all are well. How are you getting along.

Yours truly
W. L. Lothrop

[Envelope]
O O Howard
(Present)

310 7/12/1851 *From:* Rowland [B.
Howard]

To: Brother [O O Howard]

OOH-0291

Yarmouth

Source: Bowdoin

Yarmouth July 12th 1851

Dear Brother

Here am I with a pen bad enough to worry the life out of Methusaleh at his one hundredth year, although in the flower of youth. But if you won't swear, I won't.

This is one of the most beautiful days of the season and last night excelled it a hundred fold. It is almost sunset and I feel too lazy to study and so I am here burdening you with the natural productions of thoughts in such a condition, and I'll be plagued if I know what I wrote in the last sentence, but I shall leave it entirely to your sagacity.

We ought to study as if Angels were becoming and fairies goading but poor human nature is weak and inactive. But I believe I study all that mine will let me anyhow, for my health is poor and &c &c (excuses understood).

We are reviewing Cicero at a oration a day and the Greek Reader in the same proportion. Review comes easy to me, except when this queer mind of mine gets the other side up and then order from chaos is impossible and oftentimes I find that implicit trust on providence and Old Rob is all that is left me. I don't expect to take a high stand in College for my mind goes by fits and jerks although my body is one of the most trustable and docile pieces of human machinery, that ever was concocted.

We shall have to make up Sallusts Jugurtha, for we have got into our review and hav'nt touched it yet. I believe Robinson is going to intercede with the professors in our behalf. May his vast influence in that direction prosper all his undertakings for the amelioration of humanity.

We have cool weather here all of the time, I haven't seen the day yet that I could keep both of my windows up with comfort. A cold North East storm prevailed all day on the fourth, but notwithstanding all hands of us went into Portland and enjoyed ourselves the best way we could within doors. After a steady rain for all day some of the wise ones have arrived at the sage conclusion that it is just as likely to rain on the fourth as any other day of the year at the same season. How many old and established opinions were overthrown upon that rainy "fourth" it would be difficult to enumerate.

I took dinner at Lizzies and tea at Aunt Marthas. The former professes to be delighted with her trip to N York and says she was quite homesick and lonely when she felt that she had indeed started on her homeward passage. The charms of the people, the country and the scenery must indeed have been fascinating to have divided with her mother and her home the empire of her heart and the tendency of her feelings and affections. You may be assured that she enjoyed her visit exceedingly and with all your self-accusations, your company was the most agreeable part of it. The homeward journey was pleasant and she is now to all appearances well and happy. Be thankful for that and wait for more till after I take a walk and light a lamp and see whether I touch the ruling or not.

Well the duties being performed as mentioned above, I will tell you that this is a most beautiful evening. The moon looks bright and the sea breeze feels cool and refreshing. I haven't heard from home since our folks returned. I had a letter from Charles while they were gone. He says his health is pretty good.

I had quite a serious thought of writing some poetry on the "Beautiful Suicide". But magnitude of the subject overwhelmed me and I consoled myself with the consideration, simple and heartfelt as it was that Julia Bates was a darned fool for hanging herself by the neck until she was dead.

I don't know of any news except the unusual depravity of human nature as developed in the case of <booledyers> and she that in the days of her virginity was Louisa Greenwood of Wayne. Don't you think the wretch had an heir five months after marriage. What will Miss Samson say now. Bill Varnum performed the

same deed of wickedness and lust for his future wife as the sequel developed. Verily people are getting rather social!

I rec yours of the 2d safely and am much obliged for the unaccustomed favor and hope to rec another soon. I am sorry for your position towards your classmates but I hope time and a knowledge of your true character will cure all the evils arising from envy or other bad or mistaken motives. I have no friends in NY to send respects to, so you must take all to yourself. What I've written I can't say, but make the most of it that you can and still remember

Your affectionate brother
Rowland

P.S. Am devilish sorry that I did not get a truthful portrait to send you. Didn't dare to take but one look at it and didn't know how it looked. Father said it was natural and I took it for granted that it was a monkey with turned up nose and sent it along.
R B Howard

311 7/12/1851 *From:* Eliza Gilmore

To: O O Howard

OOH-0292

Leeds

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds July 12th 1851

My dear Son,

Two weeks has passed rapidly away since we arrived at our old home, and I have thought almost everyday I must write and tell you we were safely "moored in our own harbor". After your father returned from the camp, we took a hasty breakfast and repaired to the landing and past over to Cold Springs (after parting with Warren). We went in the Cars to Peekskill where we found your Uncle W.B. Howard and went to his house and stopt until the next train of Cars for Newyork. When returning to the Cars We met Cadet Randal coming from the Cars, who gave us your best respects, and we passed into the cars for New York. You Uncle came as far as Sin Sing with us.

When we came into Chambers Street, I was thinking we were near our Hotell, and thought we could Walk. I think we must have walked two miles, in the heat. We arrived at the Battery Hotell before our baggage did. I was so fatigued I did not sit up untill nearly night. Lizza did not say she was fatigued but I thought she was, and would think us mean but it was altogether a mistake. Silas came in at evening and set a while and invited Lizzy to go to the Oppera where he had an engagement, but she declined, and Mr Sargent came in and spent the evening. I think him very pleasant, and much of a gentleman.

We spent the next day at Brooklyn. We walked across the Battery to the ferry and crossed over the East river, and walked to Arza's Boarding house on Fulton Street. I might have mentioned that Arza came over in the morning and accompanied us over to Brooklyn and offered us a coach if we chose but we prefered walking on account of the view. We had a fine view of Brooklyn, and New york after dinner Arza and Lavernia walked with us on Brooklyn hights which gave us a beautiful view of the shipping on the bay, the Island, a grand view of Brooklyn, and the City of New york. I had a fine visit at Brooklyn and should have enjoyed it, if I had not been in such a fatigued state all the time, my face red and I in great heat. I think Lizzie enjoyed herself that day pretty well at least I wished her too.

We came back to the ferry and Crossed over and rested us at our Hotell, and took the Boat for Boston at five O'Clock and splendid thing it, is, after we had got seated, in the saloon Mr Sargent came on board and spent the remaining time we were at the wharf. We did not see Silas Lee, through the day. I did not think when he went out in the evening, that we should not see him again.

We had a beautiful passage across the sound, one of the most splendid evenings, and the boat moved as smoothly as one could wish. And the view on either side was more beautiful than my pen can describe, untill wearyness drove us to our berths. Lizzie had some dread and fear of sea sickness but was happily disappointed. She had a good nights rest.

Took our breakfast early, and went in the cars to Bridgewater, where we were, at 7 O'Clock, after a half hour or more spent in getting a conveyance for ourselves and baggage, we started for Easton, in a good Covered wagon with stuffed seats. We had 7 miles to travel, to get to Alson Gilmore (brother of John Gilmore). A charming, clean morning, fine farms nice homes and front yards filled with all kinds of rare plants and flowers indeed.

I don't know when I have enjoyed any scene with more true pleasure than I did that morning's ride, for I was so much absorbed in looking at the beauties around me I had no thoughts for those I had left far away. And I believe Lizzie was quite as happy to be once more on New England shore as I was. I pointed out to her where your Grandfather was born [Bridgewater] and where your father was born as we passed directly by the houses. Your father chatted about old times all the way with the man who took us over. When we arrived at Mr Alson Gilmore's, we had a warm welcome there and Mrs Gilmore [Rachel Alger] said we must make her house our home while we staid. They were surprised to find that we could stay only one day and sent for all the acquaintances to come and see us. Amongst the rest Orinthy Foss came and took tea with us and spent the evening with us.

The next morning as soon as practicable we were conveyed to North Easton and Mr Gilmore and wife and Mother accompanied us. The next morning after having a beautiful shower in the night we prepared ourselves to take the stage at six o'clock which we did only for four miles, where we entered the cars and were in Boston in a short time. Alson Gilmore and wife went into Boston with us. Mr G accompanied us into the Cars at twelve O'clock and we were soon on our way to Portland, where we arrived at 5 P.M., went to Mrs Waites.

Lyzzie was delighted to get to Mother. I went to Henrys and passed the night. The next day took dinner at Mrs Waite. Mrs Waite ask me if I said anything to you about leaving West Point. I told her I did not. I thought she and Lizzie both seemed out of spirits the morning I returned from Martha, which made me feel a little troubled, and for some days it nettled me a good deal, but I could not accuse myself of any want of tenderness towards her at any time throughout our journey, but still I know my acquaintance with young ladies is quite limited and I think sometimes I lack in delicacy that some ladies have <[torn page]>. <> from the <retine> and manner of life I have chosen for myself.

I must confess that for some time before going to West Point I thought of having a serious talk with you about the propriety of remaining there but I went and returned, and made it a subject of study as far as in my power, with my means and I think I have formed a fast idea of your situation. Now my son, how do you feel about staying and taking your chance through three remaining years with your class? Do you look forward to that reward which four years of hard labour of body and mind, might expect? I feel as though it is a place full of fatigue and danger but I do not wish you to give up any enterprise that will be for your best good, or has a prospect of placing you in an honorable position, from mere weakness, or want of judgement in female friends. I do not feel any enthusiasm or ambition for military glory, or honor. Do you my son? If you do why then say so. I should be as glad to hear your sentiments if they did not agree with mine as if they did. I never have known what your calculations were if you had not gone to West Point. Perhaps I have never sought your confidence in a proper way.

I always <shrank> from the idea of a married life for you while so young, as fraught with loads of cares from necessity but perhaps I have overrated them from deeply feeling for your great responsibility, weigh well your situation and prospects and when decision is past let no painful reflections follow you. I do not wish your youthful brow clouded with care, whatever your daily duties are I do desire that they may be done with a cheerful heart. I cannot say that my example is such, but I think I feel the necessity that it should be so more deeply than a more light hearted person, since more mature thinking of Mrs W— and Lizzie appearance on my return in the morning. Lizzie might feel dispirited from fatigue, and she is her Mothers all, might feel for her so much as to feel pained, I hope nothing that I have done, would give her painful feelings for I feel very near the same interest in her as in you if your hearts are one and would not intentionally wound her delicacy.

My son write me freely and in confidence perhaps in some way I can serve you. I have thought I wished I could see Lizzie and her Mother again, but you know I cannot.

EG.

O.O. Howard

[P.S.] I saw R.B.H. just one minute at the cars on my way home and have not heard from him since. I have not written to him & expect he is waiting for a letter from home which he will have soon I think. Just like my luck my housekeeper left about an hour before I arrived and I was truly fatigued. This is my excuse for not writing sooner. E.G.

312 7/14/1851 *From:* Eliza Gilmore

To: [O O Howard]

OOH-0293

Source: Bowdoin

Leeds July the 14 1851 [Monday] [probably continuation of letter begun on July 12 1851]

I still continue my writing. I have hardly finished my journal.

Saturday after leaving Yarmouth we soon arrived at green depot, where we found W. Mower ready to provide a conveyance to his house where we took tea and proceeded on our way home, where we found all our friends well as usual. Charles was very much improved and continued to gain. Once in a while he coughs a little just to show me that his disease is not rooted out entirely. While we were gone Johny had the mumps, and when we arrived Rodelphus had them. And Charles has them at the worst rate. He is swollen, so there is scarcely any natural look about him. He has swallowed but little to day, and his chest resembles a very fat infant of six months old. He has a strip of flax tied around him to keep the swelling from passing below his chest. Very little can be done for him. I hope he is seeing the worst of it to day.

Your father has gone to Lewiston to attend railroad meeting. Since I came home Mr Joslin has built our front yard fence and painted it white. It is quite pretty. The front yard is quite gay. Those rows of rose bushes that you set each side of the gravel walk is coved with roses besides many other plants are in blossom. It never looked so well before about here. Your father has made some improvements and Charles has not been able to work in the field as usual and since he has been gaining he has been picking up the old lumber laying about, which gives us quite neat appearance for us. I do not work in the garden much I would if I more help in the house.

Tuesday P.M.

You will see by my date how I am getting along with my letter. Last evening your father came home and said we should have seven men here at dinner, and now that I have performed that duty I again resume my pen.

I have given you some ideas of us on ourselves. How went matters with you after we left. I could not help feeling pained for you that you should get reported while we were there, and have felt anxious, since to know how you got along with it. Do write the particulars, to us, and how you feel in your encampment. Whether you are strong and healthy, or whether you feel dragged, and tired, the most of the time. I would like to know whether you enjoy yourself or not. But hard study will commence again when you return to Barracks. There is a kind of yearning for you, that I can hardly give a name.

Last Wednesday there five young men drowned at Monmouth centre. One out of six who were in a Sail boat when it capsized succeeded in swimming ashore. Capt Raulet had two sons in the Boat. One of them was the one saved. Mr Isak Clough had the Sons drowned, and Mr Clark a visitor from Newport made five that lost their lives. They were good swimmers but the weight of their Clothing exhausted them before they could reach the shore. I went out on Friday and the public services at the burial of the three Cloughs. They were three fine manly looking men. The three coffins were placed before the pulpit, a melancholly view. Their parents and four Brothers one only sister and one young lady who was engaged to one of them made up the remains of the family. Truly the hand of God seemed to be upon them. They had a large grave prepared to receive them all. Their father groaned audably after looking at them, while I was within hearing.

Your father is going to Hallowel tomorrow. I may go with him if Charles is better. You must supply what I leave out, for I am worse than ever.

[missing page]

313 7/19/1851 *From:* J. N. Jewett

To: [O O] Howard

OOH-0294

Yarmouth

Source: Bowdoin

Yarmouth July 19, 1851

Friend Howard

I have made my calculations to write you since 3 or 4 weeks ago, but unfortunately for my letter I happened to be in Portland about that time I heard that you were about to be visited in a way which I had good reason to suppose would be much more agreeable to you & I therefore concluded that I would wait until those emotions & impressions which must of necessity make my letter exceedingly insipid & uninteresting had <unasumably> passed away. A sufficient span has now elapsed I believe & although it has somewhat diffused my reply to your last I presume you do not regret in any way the cause of the delay so far as I <> it. But really I should have written earlier had it not been for the circumstance mentioned.

Well how do you find yourself feeling after a two or three Days intervening with your friends? Don't you wish study hours <are> <ours> & you permitted to mingle a little more <freely> in Society when & where you choose? I'll bet you did for once at any rate. When the parting words came slowly from your bosom in which conflicting emotions swelled high for utterance when the carriage containing the choicest treasures of life turned gradually from your lingering steps & disappeared behind a neighboring hill, or a boat, as the case may be, bore triumphantly from your lingering gaze the prize <look> which for you there is no other on Earth. Then I imagine you wished for the exercise of a natural <fudoms>, for the sudden sending of those <steam> bonds by which you are held to obedience in confinement that you might view with them the varied scenes of nature & of art & return with them to your Eastern home.

How is it am I not right or about right?

But alas! Students & Teachers are just where they put themselves & then must stay till their terms of service expires, unless they forcibly break away from the <> to which they have voluntarily subjected themselves, which for the most part is a course with easily resolved <> or easily followed. <True> we must make the best of it whilst for me thus shut up how hard it may seem. But my term of services is almost over unless they conclude to pay me my own price for a longer continuance here, which I suspect they will not do. I have offered to stay another year for \$700.00 though I am perfectly indifferent to remaining here at that rate. They must decide soon however for there are only 4 weeks more of this Term & then I am off. I shall not shed many tears on leaving Yarmouth, I opine you. There are some good people here, but there are more who do not know B from Bull's foot to speak in an old fashioned vulgar way. This is the most <ignoramus> <?nted> with the most self complacency & self conceit here that I ever found in one little place. And now there is so much quarrelling going on that the place is perfectly barbarous.

However in spite of all this <unformable> appearance I have got along very comfortably during the past year more so perhaps than I should <again> for I should know better how to act another time. I have been watching the moments of things without saying much so far I am now ready to speak which I should most certainly do & that plainly if I am to remain here much longer.

This year of out of college life is almost passed & how differently are we situated from what we were 12 months ago now! Then we were all together as a class, rejoicing in the prospect of speedy liberations from the bonds that had held us for 3 or 4 years. Now we are scattered on almost our whole country.

By the way I suppose you cannot come on to commencement. That will be a grand treat to those who can enjoy it. Townsend tells me that he is coming & I hope we shall have quite a class gathering - Old Buck & Perley & Adams & Jackson &c &c wont we have one of the Linaes'. But if I remain here another year I shall not be there, for I shall <> my vacation for a visit to Wisconsin & that will include Commencement time. I should be sorry for that, though in that case it cannot be helped.

We have been getting along very finely this Term with a school of nearly 50 scholars. I have a fine boarding place which adds not a little to the agreeableness of my situation.

As to news I hardly know of any. I can't think of anything worth telling, such a dearth in this respect I have seldom known. We had a most gloomy 4th of July. I was in Portland all day but it rained all the time & nothing was done. My health is much better than when I wrote you last though it is not entirely recovered. I shall need the journey out west on that account. Perley was quite well when I last saw him. Now, Howard, just let us hear from you within the next 4 weeks as by that time I shall be able to let you know where I shall be next year.

Truly Yr Friend
J. N. Jewett

314 7/27/1851 *From:* [O O Howard]

To: Father & Guardian [John Gilmore]

OOH-0295

West Point

Source: Bowdoin

West Point July 27, 1851

My dear father & guardian,

For what reason I cannot tell, but there certainly is a combination against me, either to give me demerit or to betray me into some indiscretion in the hope that I may break some important regulation of this Academy, and receive a severe punishment, perhaps a dismissal. Several movements on the part of many of my Classmates, have produced this conviction. Under this impression, I have striven, all that lay in my power to do my duty: I have taken pains to observe the regulations in little things as well as in great. As I have never before been in Camp, my ignorance has betrayed me into some blunders, the reports for which I acknowledge to be just, and do not even attempt to get them canceled by any excuse. But many of my reports, the majority of them in fact, I do not deserve. Others of my class are not reported under the same or like circumstances. Every time I go on guard, take all the pains I may, I must get several demerit. This together with insults & slights that I cannot meet or answer without appearing to be myself the aggressor and thereby putting my position in jeopardy have so much exasperated me that I cannot think. I cannot resolve what to do. I see no prospect of redress. If I write an excuse it is insufficient; if I deny a report or say what any impartial cadet knows to be true that the report was given me through malice. Why such an excuse is improper is highly insulting not only to the reporting officer, but to the commandant.

There then I am. Cadets, who are my enemies, report me, and officers of the Army suffer the demerit to remain & be recorded. <> I can no longer bear. I must either have justice done me or I must resign my warrant as Cadet. I cannot exhaust all the energies of my youth in a pursuit worse than useless.

To live as I do now, the constant object of slight neglect and malice, I feel to be absolutely degrading. Had I talents of sufficient strength to keep at the head of my class, in spite of my enemies, I should think my prospect a little different, but even then I fear that three years at West Point would be of very little lasting benefit.

I wish you to write me your permission to resign. I may not use it, probably shall not be forced to, but I wish for justice & if I cannot obtain it, I shall have your permission as an instrument in my hands to fall back upon if necessary.

14th chapter Job. "If a man dies shall he live again?"

[no closing]

[there are mathematical equations on both pages in the margins - it is as if someone had used this as scrap paper to solve a math problem]

315 7/29/1851 *From:* O O Howard

To: Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0296

West Point N.Y.

Source: Bowdoin

West Point N.Y. July 29 1851

Dear Mother

I have received your letter, I feel grateful to you for the pains you took to describe your journey so minutely. Your account possessed for me a great deal of interest. I am sorry to learn that you found <those> unhappy visitants, the mumps, in your house, when you returned, and am anxious to hear that they passed without doing any harm.

You said Mrs Waite looked disappointed. That is natural, for she loves her daughter, and feels that she is alone in the wide world trusting implicitly in the integrity of a young man; who however good his intentions still does little to warrant an earnest of that support and protection which he promises. I think a great deal & ponder over my lot, my circumstances, my prospects, but <to> confess the truth I have no great decision of mind. I do not want energy, but a spirit of resolve, upon which to rely with unflinching firmness.

My present position does not by any means render me contented, but hope brightens every thing. To tell the truth I do not dare to leave this place. I am afraid that other places will be filled with equal or worse difficulties. And if I once suffer myself to yield to injustice & malice, what can I trust in any other situation? Once of late, when I felt myself grossly wronged, and failed to get justice I went so far as to write to father to give me permission to resign my warrant as Cadet; that I might try my talents & my fortune in another and perhaps a more appropriate sphere.

But I called to mind the care & solicitude my uncle had exhibited towards me. How foolish he would think me, if I lightly gave up a place fraught with so many superior advantages, which but few of the young men of our land are permitted to enjoy. I thought that thus far by perseverance & industry if not by great natural talent, I had shown myself inferior to none. Thousands & thousand of preventatives soon rose up to check my momentary despondency. I resolved or rather thought I would give the place another chance to redeem itself in my good graces.

Did I believe it for Lizzie's ultimate good or should she insist upon it as such, that I should leave West Point and its military prospects for a quiet social existence. Why my honor, my heart, my sense of right would constrain me to leave; for to confess, what is likely to seem a weakness to the more practical spirit of riper years, I think my happiness is in a great measure to consist in making her happy. Yet whatever position I gain for myself she is to share with me, if Providence has not ordered it otherwise.

To be smited when very young, is too apt to be a clog upon that youthful energy which is the only surety of prosperity to a young man in moderate circumstances. It is not always so - it might not be the case with me; for I take much pride in showing myself a man; yet to be prepared for married life before one takes its responsibilities is too good a maxim too often attended with bad consequences when neglected, to be violated by one of my natural prudence.

Aug 1st.

Since I began this letter I have walked a tour of guard duty. The next day I can do nothing ever but sleep and rest. Therefore you perceive I have to finish it the third day. You ask me what I think of military glory. I think nature has endowed me with very little military spirit, so little that I would fight but poorly in a bad cause. Every body, however, who has any desire for distinction, must make the most of the means within their power. I would like to be a high officer in the army, but were my talents of the right kind & equal to it I would prefer to be a statesman. In fact I do not know what I am fitted for. I have about 30 demerit, 20 of which I do not deserve; but it is of but very little use trying to get them off, since they are such kind of reports that they cannot be cancelled excepting by the officer who reports me. Lieut Jones hates me. During a leave of absence of Capt Alden of about a fortnight he has been Acting Comndt, which made the time go hard with me. For my enemies would report me & he would not take the report off. he thinks I have a penchant for low company and will let no opportunity slip to exhibit his deep dislike. Capt. Alden has as yet shown himself my friend and I consider him a

very just man. If it were not for him I should leave as soon as possible. I am blamed by what friends I have for taking things with such apparent coolness, for not retorting upon those who show so much malice towards me. I don't know why; but it seems to me I never had so much patience before. The future will show notwithstanding my tameness, that I am bound to have my rights.

I met Warren yesterday & spoke with him the first time for three weeks. He said he was going home soon, this month I believe. He said I looked more fleshy than when you were here. My health is very good. I believe I told you about several young men going out after taps to play the rogue with the plebes who were Sentinels, and that one of these young men, Mr Gordon of my class got pierced in the lungs. His wound was very slight, and is now entirely well, so that <he> is performing all his military duties. What I was going <to> tell you was that this affair caused a Court of Inquiry to be instituted, which is now & has been for several days in session. It is thought that certain young <men> engaged in this "outrage" will be dismissed. I was in my tent & fast asleep, out of harm's way.

You must see Aunt Lucretia and tell her to come. The month of August is the most pleasant & favorable time to visit West Point. Uncle Ward has been to see me, but did not stop but a few minutes. He asked if Aunt was coming. I shall try to visit Peekskill with her if she comes, and if she does not, I think I shall go alone. Our Encampment <is> now over half through. The 28th or 29th of this month we shall return to barracks. I expect that this <demerit> & drawing will throw me from the head. But <> much more will be the credit if I stand ahead in spite of all these things. That will be the <best> revenge I can ask for all my ill treatments.

Give my love to Aunt [Lucretia] Leadbetter. Give it also to Uncle Ensign's family individually and collectively. I have not heard from any of them of late, not even from Laura, who is so good to write letters.

If you see Uncle John you must talk with him about my situation & prospects at West Point. Tell him of the opprobrium to which I have to submit. He once said that he wished for no better criterion by which to judge a young man, than the estimation in which he was held by his class. This I think would give me rather an unfavorable character. Write me how his new wife does. I don't remember that you told me when you were here. Just before, Mrs Gardiner said she was very low. Tell me how Charlie gets on with the mumps. If he is cheerful and in good spirits generally.

Now during some of these long nights <on> post my mind often reverts to you. I often long to be in your midst. I can't make it seem that I <am> never again to live at home as of old. It seems as if I were only away at school for a while, whence I shall soon return to enjoy "each passing day" free from clouding care. But reality whispers; you life has begun in earnest the happiness of your early home has become a remembrance. It is true that no one knows what home is until he has been long away, until it dwells only in his conception. I amuse myself by picturing you in my fancy in the midst of your various employments; making you take at times all the places I have seen you in. I almost always see father asleep in his chair with his paper or his candle & paper in his hand.

How does Dellie look? Is he fleshy, Is he manly? He will be a big boy when I see him again. It seems as if I could see him hanging around your chair while you were studying out my scribbling to see if Otis wrote anything about him. And there is Johnny, if he is with you, with his good natured face. Give them & Charlie my love, the only thing I have to send them. Tell Roland A. to remember me to the young ladies of Leeds whom he sees at the Sunday evening meetings & at parties. My regards to him, since he might think it "small business" sending love to a young man with whiskers. It has been a very long time since I have seen him.

Tell father that our battalion now presents a splendid appearance, that we have an additional parade just after breakfast.

Last evening we had what is called a stag dance. The strip of ground upon which we dance is rectangular - about 60 feet by 12. All along each of the edges is a row of candles about two inches high & a foot apart. You can hardly imagine how pretty it looks on the green. Then the cadets uniform & manner of dancing add much to the beauty & oddity of the scene. They dance till 9 o'clock, then waltz out the lights, which have burned pretty low. Then they wind up by singing songs till 'tattoo'. Two or three hundred people were collected to see us last evening.

I think I have written about as much as you will have patience to unravel for I am writing with a horrid pen, and as you would say in an awkward position, lying down. I shall try to see Warren before he goes to Maine. Tell his friends that he is well.

I had a letter from Rowland a few days since & answered it. You must not let yourself be too anxious for me.

Probably every thing will turn out for the best. Believe me as ever

Your affectionate son
O. O. Howard