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362 2/1/1852

*From:* R. H. Gilmore

*To:* Cadet O O Howard

OOH-0341

South Leeds

West Point  
N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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South Leeds Feb 1 (1852) [the year was written in later, but it agrees with the letter from Rowland on Jan 30, 1852]

Dear brother

our school will kep two days more. I think Mr Bates will not get a <new> scool. It snows very hard. I have the headache. Rowland has got all most well. He is able to go all round the house. Doctr Garcelon sed he would get well soon if he takes care of himself. I canot write a great deal. My head feels very bad. Our folks are eating dinner. I will make some letters. A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P a b c or C d e f g h i j k l m n o p q r s t u n u x y z S Q R S T U V W H X Y Z

from R. H. Gilmore

[to] O. O. Howard

[Envelope]

Cadet O. O. Howard

West Point

N.Y.

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363 2/9/1852

*From:* Ward B Howard

*To:* Cousin [O O Howard]

OOH-0342

Peekskill, N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Peekskill 9 Feby 52 [Monday]

Dear Cousin

W. Augustus died last Evening at ½ past 10 Oclk, after a painful illness of two weeks. His funeral will take place on Wednesday at ½ Past 10 AM. We should be pleased to have you with us on that occasion, also Mr Rundell, if the permission of Capt. Brewerton can be obtained for such purposes.

Your much afflicted and affectionate Uncle.

Ward B Howard

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364 2/15/1852 *From:* Otis [Howard]

*To:* Mother [Eliza Gilmore]

OOH-0343

West Point N.Y.

*Source:* Bowdoin

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West Point N.Y. Feb 15th 1852

Dear Mother,

I have received a letter & a paper from Rowland since I have written him, but I believe I have written him since I have written you, therefore I will address myself to my mother this time. Again, Rowland may have changed his purposes & returned to college. I presume it makes little difference to you at home to whom I personally address my letters, provided I do not neglect to write. Since as I suppose Otis' letters become common property among you. Taking this view of the case, one would think I ought to take much pains with my letters. So I ought, but I forget to do so. I begin with some such resolutions but they are soon swallowed up in thought all engrossing & lively reminiscences of home.

I have fulfilled the sad duty of attending the funeral of my Cousin Augustus the past week. I received a letter from Uncle Ward on Monday apprising me of his death, and inviting me to his funeral which was to take place the ensuing Wednesday. I got permission and started Wednesday morning immediately after Reveille crossing the river on the ice. It was then very warm & raining hard so that the crossing was becoming rather dangerous, but we crossed, Mr Rundell & myself, in safety. I found when I reached Uncle's that Augustus had been attacked with a violent brain fever two weeks before his death; this fever threw him into a delirium which scarcely left him till he breathed his last a week ago this evening. He wrote me a very cheerful letter just before he was taken ill, so that the news of his death came very unexpectedly to me. He must have had a dreadful struggle the last few days of his life, for his flesh was all wasted away, and he was so dreadfully emaciated that I could scarcely recognize him as the same young man whom I left a few weeks before so full of cheerfulness & hope. His father set much by him & feels his death deeply. He scarcely left his bed-side during his last illness & took no rest. His sister misses him & weeps for him. Yet both feel reconciled to his death - "It is better - say they - than such a life, as he seemed doomed to lead." So also it seems to me; and I am in no wise certain that an early death for the human being prepared to die is not always gain. But life is sweet & who in the freshness of youth is willing to part with it? Uncle has about half consented to go to Maine with me, when I go on furlough.

What troubles me most is Rowland's last letter. I cannot bear the idea that he should lose his place in his class. Yet I would not have him endanger his health. "Health of course must be the first consideration. He must, however, try his hand at studying at home. I never made any great headway at it I know, but I think I could have studied at home, had a years standing been at stake. But my constitution is of firmer build than than his. It seems odd to me, but I never have had the least cough since I have been here. Last winter I went till January without a great coat & this winter I have worn, till within a very few days, a pair of shoes as thin as as your own; no cadet ever has any cough. This perhaps is owing to the atmosphere of the place in a measure. I am troubled a little of late with indigestion, but it is because I eat too much & too fast and since there are no drills, I have no exercise.

Mr Rundell & myself returned from Peekskill after the funeral the same night, leaving there about eight o'clock in the evening. We came up in the cars, leaving them at the station house, just opposite the Point. It was very dark but had ceased to rain. The ice had started in the river, and cadets as we were, we did not have the hardihood to attempt to walk back the way we came, for in the morning in broad day light we had trouble enough to keep out of the holes. So we walked down the river about two miles till we came to a place where the river was open; swung a lantern over our heads as a signal to the ferry man on the opposite shore. He answered us by a like demonstration, rowed across in a few moments & took us back, safe & sound. Then we had two miles to walk in the mud nice & deep. I took the lead & in a half hour was in my room, wet with perspiration & covered with mud. I had just time to change my clothes & get into bed when taps beat. So you see by a little perseverance I managed not to over-stay my leave this time. Rundell almost always over stays his leaves & would this time if it had not been for me.

Give my love to Rowland B, Roland A, Charlie, Dellie & father. All in a bunch. I am sorry to see the downfall of all Uncle Ensign's rail-road projects. Remember me to his & John's family when you meet them.

I receive the Advertiser every Thursday & tell father he could not have done me a greater favor than he did by subscribing for it for me. Now I can amuse myself over the results of the celebrated 'Liquor Law'. Cadets are generally strenuously opposed to this law. I have based my opinion of it entirely on its efficiency. If it really subserves the cause of temperance, to the extent that it seems to, I am its advocate. I hope however that political matter will not be made of it, that it will not be adopted as the child of any particular party, but that it will be regarded like any other law which serves to protect the community against crime & violence, as an efficient agent for purging our state, and ridding it of the pest which has so long infected it. I feared at first that the measure was a little premature - perhaps too violent. That the opposition against it would hinder its execution & subvert the object intended, but I am glad to see it is not so. I am the only cadet that I have heard speak in favor of it. Mr Browne is deady opposed to it. Sawtelle thinks the people of Maine are acting the fool or are crazy.

I love reform. As I stand here among young men from all parts of the union, each praising his own state, my eye turns towards my own, my ideas become in a measure generalized, and I look upon Maine as a whole more than I used to & long for her prosperity. I rejoice especially to see her take the lead in any question of importance, especially in any moral, intellectual or political reform. It seems nonsense often, "gass" as the phrase 'goes' to hear a man professing attachment to his state, that is it seems so to those who, with discontented spirits work on from day to day & scarcely leave the limited space of their immediate neighborhood. But let them go away where local questions are never thought of where the State is spoken of continually, as a whole, then local attachments are less felt, and local prejudices give place to wider views and unconsciously you will find that your state at large has become the theme of your thoughts & to some degree an object of your affections. It is said by the traveler that he knows not that he loves his country, till he has once left its bounds, till he can view it as a whole & at a distance.

My sheet is full. Good night. Write soon.

Your affectionate son.  
Otis

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365 2/22/1852 *From:* Eliza Gilmore

*To:* O O Howard

OOH-0344

Leeds

*Source:* Bowdoin

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Leeds February 22th 1852

My Dear Son,

This is the sabbath and rather snowy. We have just now concluded our sabbath dinner and Nancy is clearing away the dinner dishes while I am giving my time to writing to my distant son; and in a sick room for Roland is confined to his bed, with a fever. He was seized with a violent fever a few days since. It has some what abated and I am hopes, he will be about house in a few days.

I was surprised to hear of Augustus Howard's death, thinking he might live a great many years. I knew so little of him and his worth that I can reason coldly in regard to him, or his care, as death is in the world and we must all meet him some day. He might as well meet his cold embrace now as at any time, but I am not wanting in sympathy for his bereaved father and sister. His childhood has past before them in brightness and hope and all his former promise is recorded in their hearts, and they have seen them cut off as when they were looking for their britest hopes to be realized. But I hope he has joined his Mother in a world of everlasting bliss. I have been told that her interest and care for him were intense, that even when her health was such that she could not sit up, she had her cot in her parlor and kept him with her, from what I have been told of the strength of character she possessed I thought he would be a fine young man.

R.B.H. has regained his flesh. You would not judge from his looks there was any lack in his health any how, neither from his general appearance. He is cheerful. I cannot advise him anyway. He wears a warm great coat over his dress coat in our warm rooms. He reads the most of the time, goes out but little, but to think of his going back to those cold cold College rooms and confining himself to hard study is no use, in his present habits is not to be thought of he says. His looks are so healthful he could not get excused from the slightest duty. Sometimes I think if his habits could be changed, if he would rise early in the morning and bathe in cold water and walk swiftly untill he become warm with exercise, he might get a good circulation in that way. I have mentioned the subject to him and offered to rub him to get the right circulation, but he does not seem to have any energy about him. Walking is out of the question. We have not had ten mornings in three months that an invalid could do that. We have had a very uncomfortable winter in every respect. The day you went to Peekskill we had rain here all day which settled the snow and made the traveling hard and slippery, but another snow storm has covered the ice deep under it.

Your grandmother is at your Uncle Ensign's stoping for some time. She has not been here yet. She been there more than a month. I don't think she is as well usual and seems older and more child like than ever before. Your aunt Ann is with Martha Jane at Portland enjoying herself very much, receiving visits and visiting. Mother had a letter from her and M.J. one week since in which they mentioned some of the places she had visited. One was Mrs Waites. I have heard lately that old Mr Waite had died this winter, Lizzies Grandfather, but none of the particulars of his death.

Ann mentioned Judge Wells and wife had called to see her, and Mrs Wells was much rejoiced at the return of her son Charles, your old acquaintance, and school fellow. Said she look on him as one from the dead, she had never expected to see him again, had not heard from for three years until they heard from him in Newyork. Said his health was not good. You did not say whether Addison came up to West Point or not. When he was here he said he should go to see you. Your aunt Ann is delighted with his engagement in marriage to Mrs Brooks of Hollowel.

I missed Doct. Lord this winter very much. Doct Gancelon took charge of Rowland through his sickness and Doct Prescott of Monmouth has visiting Roland A. He is practicing in this part of the town. Tell doct L if you write to him he is very much missed greatly here. We have a great deal of sickness in town this winter. We have no Physician yet. I suspect the Doct has meet with some cold weather this winter where he is, if we judge from the statements in the papers.

Charlie is thinking of Readfield this spring but I have little courage to have him go from me, as there is very few days that I do not have nursing to do for him. He is fond of improvement. He is reading the history of England

now. Dellie will talk about every Country in the four quarters of the Globe, if anybody will talk with him. He has been in woods and chopped wood with his father two days. Our wood pile is laying along by the wall as usual ready for spring chopping.

I do not allow myself to dwell on the future in Rowland case. There is not a doubt but his lungs are diseased, and must depend on the future care he has of himself. The deaths in town are Mr Isaac Gould, Mr William Moulton, Mr Luther Ramsdell, Mr Ruggles Sylvester, Mrs C Tuppen, Mrs Beals at Mr Thomas Additons. Those are what I can recollect, in Leeds.

Tuesday

I shall be under the necessity of closing my letter without covering all the white paper, as I have company. You must try and make as good sense of it as you can. Your affectionate mother

Eliza Gilmore

[to] O O Howard

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366 2/23/1852 *From:* Rowland [B.  
Howard]

*To:* O O Howard

OOH-0345

South Leeds

*Source:* Bowdoin

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South Leeds Feb 23d 52

Dear Brother

I am in hopes to enclose this in a letter which Mother proposes to write you today. It is more trouble for her to write than for me and therefore I shall relieve her as much as possible. I had as leave write all day as not (such as it is) were it not for lameing my wrist by the operation. My health has not improved at all since my last but has rather failed than otherwise. I went to Halard last week and took considerable cold in riding home on a cold raw day. But my appetite is good and my strength middling for one of my obesity. My principle trouble is inflammation of my lungs, causing soreness of the chest and considerable cough mornings. I have on now two or three plasters as counter-irritants and am in hopes to experience some relief therefrom. It is now one week since the term commenced and I have not studied any yet. The Dr told me it would be better to make up half a term than to study much in the present state of my health and the weather.

Mother rec yours by last nights mail and as you conjecture it has passed through the whole reading circle. For my cousin deceased, I cannot feel otherwise under the circumstances than an entire stranger. Mother feels otherwise, has seen and conversed with him. I am glad that you take an interest in the Maine. It is something that every Maine man should be proud to own and vindicate. Its past has placed our state in an enviable position and gives consistency and truth to her motto, *Dirigo*, which heretofore I have thought was presumptuous for the cold north east corner of Down East to assume. I think that our beloved state is destined to some thing the same position towards the rest of the states that the little republic of San Marino bears to the states of Italy. Situated on cold, inhospitable mountains, sparsely populated with few resources or wealth of no political importance. It has furnished an example to the world of a people free, but firm and decided in their government - catholic, but consistent and upright in their religion and morals and amid the changes, ambitions and counter revolutions of a thousand years, as a state it has constantly maintained its independence and integrity. I look upon Maine as a state not destined to lead in wealth, political importance and influence, but in social and moral reform. She is already a noble example and her hardy men and women have vocally raised her standard and sternly say *Dirigo!!*

So much for our Pine Tree mother. If it was requisite for you to reside abroad, in order to inspire you with 'amor patriae' I am glad that event has taken place. But if you lose Maine, defend her highest and almost her first honor among her sisters.

The Rum law. What it has done for her you have seen, what it will do for her, Henrys way of judging is "the future by the fact" N.H. is agitating the passage of the Law. Mass will pass it. R.I. has passed it, N.Y. must pass it. She may not this year but I wager petitioners with 'Horace' at their head will not be driven, coaxed nor bought, although without doubt patriotic Distillers, Sellers, importers &c are contributing strongly for a latter trial, republican measure. The most interesting thing to the people of Leeds at present is the division of their own. Almost every man has his own position which he of course pertinaciously maintains as the best. The most practicable, feasible and popular method that I have heard of, is to enact each individual (is that a ball?) but into a separate town. I think that all antagonistical interests would in that way be reconciled.

All of this difficulty arose from the here celebrated Loan question which if passed, the dear people imagined would cause great revolutions in Stocks and place an almost fabulous amount of money in the hands of Capitalists. Whereas the Simple question was whether the town would become responsible for the interest on \$15000 worth of RR Bonds if the business of the Road did not pay that much. And so we have had town meetings, and speeches more remarkable from their energy than their eloquence. I attended one of the aforesaid meetings and the way Turner Gould Bacon & Co spread themselves was a caution to amateurs. The eloquent Lloyd took the American Eagle for his theme and standing with his head within half an inch of the plastering foaming at the mouth, red from over exertion if he did'nt discourse direct 'music' then I know nothing of the nature of aforesaid bird.

Of Rolands sickness Mother will probably write you. William and Maria were well when I was at H. Halowl has

become a city. It has some thing like 2500 inhabitants. The snow is about three feet deep. Father has finished getting up his wood. I think I will write to Lizzie today. I shall expect a letter from you on Tuesday.

Rowland